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Mary Eleanora Gifford

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SEVERAL METHODS

AND

PRACTICES

OF

DEVOTION:

APPERTAINING TO A

RELIGIOUS LIFE.

COLLECTED TOGETHER

BY THE

Right Hon. Lady LUCY HERBERT,

Of POWIS,

Superior of the Engliſh Auguſtin Nuns.

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SEVERAL METHODS AND PRACTICES OF DEVOTION: APPERTAINING TO A RELIGIOUS LIFE.

CHAP. I.

OF PRAYER.

SEC. I.

The great advantages and benefit of it.

PRAYER is the means which God gives us to attain to our laſt end; and to that ſanctity and perfection he has deſigned us. 'Tis of ſuch profit, that a damned ſoul would ſuffer all her tor-

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ments, and twice as much, till the day of Judgement, to have the fruit thereof.

Our Holy Father, St. Auguſtin, ſays, 'Tis the key of all God's heavenly treaſures. How much does our poverty and want of all good ſtand in need of ſuch a key!

'Tis the channel by which God's graces are conveyed into our ſouls. 'Tis compared to Jacob's Ladder, by means of which our ſouls aſcend to God; we by it learning to know, love, and adore him; and he deſcends to us by his graces, and the knowledge he gives us of our nothing.

As the body walks on its feet, ſo the ſoul walks towards God by her three powers in Prayer.

By Prayer our ſouls become the Kingdom of God, whoſe Throne raiſed in our hearts, is that of his mercy; and God becomes to us what we pleaſe ourſelves, as we do to him.

Prayer is, to a devout Chriſtian, a bottomleſs treaſure, ſo that he may ſay with truth, that in that one he has all other bleſſings. 'Tis by Prayer that God is moved to execute all thoſe favourable deſigns his mercy has over us.

There is nothing that Prayer can aſk, and Heaven can refuſe; neither relief to the

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the poor, nor comfort to the afflicted, nor victory to the oppreſt, nor grace and pardon to ſinners, nor any virtue to the juſt: in a word, whoever knows how to aſk what he wants, can never want what he aſks.

Prayer is the greateſt bleſſing that Heaven can beſtow; 'tis a blank ſigned by Almighty God, wherein we may write what requeſt we pleaſe, with a full ſecurity that it is granted, if we perform our part.

By Prayer only thoſe graces are obtained, neceſſary towards the Salvation of moſt, nay of all, according to our Holy Father; for the grace of perſeverance is neceſſary to Salvation, and it is never given but to thoſe who obtain it by their Prayers: for the Juſt could no more perſevere without God's ſpecial aſſiſtance, than they could acquire virtue without his merciful grace.

Prayer brings a perſon to the perfection God calls her to: there is not a bleſſing of Heaven which flows not through that channel.

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SEC. II.

Of the Neceſſity of Prayer, chiefly mental.

The Prayers Chriſt made for us, tho' of themſelves ſo forcible; and the Sacrifices of himſelf offered for us, though of an infinite value; muſt be applied to us, or they will avail us nothing; and they are only applied to us by our Prayers and Sacrifices offered to him.

St. Gregory ſays that Prayer is the principal means that the Divine Providence makes uſe of to execute what God has deſigned us from all Eternity, but will not give us without being aſked.

Unleſs we become perſons of Prayer, we ſhall never attain perfection nor the love of God.

It is by means of Prayer that we reform what corrupt nature continually produces in our hearts; it is therefore called the murderer of vices and the nurſery of virtues. If we find in our ſouls any paſſion or evil inclination which troubles her peace, it is in Prayer we muſt find a remedy, as well as to whatever may hinder our progreſs in virtue.

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As we are by our ſtate obliged to tend to perfection, ſo conſequently we are obliged to uſe mental Prayer, and, according to the progreſs we make therein, we may judge of that we make in perfection.

Food is not more neceſſary to maintain our corporal life, than Prayer is to maintain the ſpiritual life of our ſouls; which conſiſts in knowing and loving God.

The reaſon, if there is but few Saints in religious Communities, is becauſe few apply themſelves to Prayer as they ought. A perſon addicted to Prayer, though without learning, and of few or no talents, ſhall produce wonders in advancing God's glory and drawing ſouls to him; whereas another with learning, and more talents, ſhall produce no ſuch fruit.

A ſervant of God uſed to ſay, that by his Morning Prayer he could tell what the reſt of the day would be; which ſhews the neceſſity of our well performing that duty.

Nothing will be a greater regret to us in purgatory, nay in Heaven, (if we could be capable of grief there) than not to have employed the time of Prayer as

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as we ought; ſince by it we might have obtained what we ſtood in need of, and enriched ourſelves with all we wanted; God having promiſed to deny nothing that we ſhould aſk praying.

After Chriſt's Baptiſm, the Heavens were only opened when he prayed; to teach us that, after baptiſmal grace, no other is obtained but by Prayer, and conſequently how neceſſary Prayer is.

SEC. III.

Of the Uſe we muſt make of Aridities and Diſtractions in mental Prayer.

We muſt firſt underſtand that the gift of Prayer is a gift of God, which is not acquired by human induſtry; but his Divine Majeſty gives it, and that only to the humble, who perſevere to preſent themſelves before him with an intention and deſire to do their beſt to pleaſe him, entirely abandoning themſelves to his providence.

By the gift of Prayer is meant a facility to raiſe our thoughts and unite our minds to God; and to make ſolid reflections, conceive good affections, and expreſs

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expreſs ourſelves to his Divine Majeſty, by interior words and ſentiments produced from the heart.

We muſt make a difference between the ſucceſs of our Prayer and our application to it. The firſt depends no more on us, than the rain depends on the earth, but it depends on God alone. The ſecond depends on us with the help of God's grace, we labouring as the ſower does, but expecting the increaſe and growth only from God.

If God draws us to ſome affection as ſoon as we are placed in his preſence, we muſt not fix ourſelves to the points propoſed, but follow that affection as long as we find ourſelves drawn by it.

We muſt not loſe courage nor be dejected, when ſo dry that our underſtanding cannot diſcourſe of any thing, nor our will find any affection or guſt; but in this caſe we ought, now and then, to lift up our minds to God by ſhort aſpirations; as for example:

We endeavour to diſcourſe upon the firſt point of our meditation, and nothing occurs, let us lift up our minds to God and ſay, *O my God! your will be done*; then endeavour to diſcourſe again, and if nothing

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thing occurs, ſay, *My God, I wiſh I could love and ſerve you better.* Then try again, and if the ſame, ſay, *Dear Lord, you know what I am, for you made me: I would fain be able to entertain you, but my weakneſs and ſtupidity is ſo great, that I find myſelf incapable of being united to you in mind, or keeping my thoughts upon the ſubject of my meditation.*

This done, endeavour to bring back your thoughts with peace and quiet to the ſubject of your meditation; forcing yourſelf to remain with reſpect and ſubmiſſion in the preſence of God, kneeling humbly with your hands joined; and if you ſtill wander from the ſubject, and are as dry as before, produce again ſome ſuch aſpirations, till your time allotted for prayer is ended.

God is not diſpleaſed nor angry with us for the diſtractions we have againſt our will; but rather has compaſſion of us and is pleaſed, if at the ſight of them we humble ourſelves, and endeavour to bring back our thoughts to him. And tho' we ſhould be diſtracted a hundred times, we muſt not trouble ourſelves, but ſweetly put ourſelves in his preſence again, as if nothing had happened; and never make reflections

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reflections upon what distracted us, neither by interior lamentations or contrary acts, for that were to imprint them more in our mind.

Although, during the time of Prayer, we did nothing else but withdraw our minds from distractions, and sweetly replace ourselves in the presence of God, fixing our thoughts again on our subject of meditation; yet should we have employed our time not less profitably and meritoriously, than if we had been interiorly recollected the whole time, because we did what was in our power, and God, who requires no more, will not fail sooner or later to recompense our fidelity if we persevere in so doing, and that perhaps with the gift of Prayer.

This gift of Prayer is one of the greatest gifts that God bestows on earth to souls that are faithful to him; and those who know its value, will prefer it to that of Prophecy and working Miracles, and to all other gifts. That soul to whom God gives it, is rich for her life, and more rich than those who have the gift of knowledge, eloquence, and learning, for a person of Prayer is the object of God's complaisance;

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complaiſance; it is with her he takes his delights.

But whatever degree of perfection we are arrived to, we muſt not of ourſelves preſume higher than the common ſort of Prayer, which conſiſts in meditation, affection, and good purpoſes, or reſolutions: our ſtudy muſt be to labour courageouſly for ſolid virtue, and eſpecially the mortification of our paſſions. As to a higher Prayer, God will raiſe us to it when he ſees his time, and ſo much the ſooner, as we ſeek it leſs, and remain in the humble knowledge of our nothing and unworthineſs: it is then he will probably ſay to us, *Amice aſcende ſuperius.* Friend aſcend up higher.

What we muſt ſeek in Prayer, is only God, and to pay our duty to him; neither expect nor deſire great lights, or ſuch like favours, but only the pure love of God, and of his Croſs. Commonly the greateſt falls in Holy ſouls have been after the greateſt conſolations. Yet we muſt not contemn ſenſible devotion under pretence that it brings no ſolid virtue, for though this be true in effect, yet it helps much to virtue, and Saints have made great profit by conſolations.

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This we muſt be convinced of, that Prayer without mortification is a meer illuſion and fancy. It is by Prayer that we muſt learn to mortify ourſelves, and therefore we muſt not eſteem that time loſt which has been ſpent in aridity and reſiſting diſtractions, for then we practiſe mortification, which is the fruit of Prayer.

The ſecureſt mortifications and penances, according to the teſtimony of ſeveral holy and experienced perſons, is interior recollection and Prayer; ſo that few or none, if they conſulted nature, would not rather employ the like time in the moſt painful corporal labour; becauſe that ſo the natural liberty of thinking is thereby conſtrained, our appetite ſuppreſt, our motions reſtrained, our will tied up, and our mind attentive not to give entrance to any thing that may diſtract or trouble the repoſe of our ſouls: in ſhort, the whole is under a conſtraint which is very painful.

SEC. IV.

Of Preparation for Prayer.

Preparation for Prayer is abſolutely neceſſary; without it we tempt God, as

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the Holy Scripture ſays, by inconſiderately performing an action of ſo great importance; which Chriſt has merited for us with his precious blood and death, in order to attain to that degree of glory deſigned for us. This ought to raiſe in us a great confidence of obtaining what we want and pray for; and alſo a care not to miſpend or loſe ſo precious a time.

The Remote Preparation.

This Remote Preparation is firſt a high eſteem of Prayer, often begging the gift of it. 2dly, Mortification, eſpecially of our paſſions. 3dly, Purity of heart. And laſtly, Interior recollection, elevating our thoughts to God from time to time.

Over night we ſhould foreſee the points we are next day to meditate upon, and endeavour to imprint them well in our mind; and ſee what bent and inclination we will endeavour to give to our hearts.

As we go to Prayer we may imagine thoſe words of the Prophet ſpoke to us: *God expects you to do you mercy.* Let us diſpoſe ourſelves for it, in the ſpirit of Sacrifice, ſeeking only to content God.

SEC. V.

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SEC. V.

What we are to obſerve in Time of Prayer.

This familiar compariſon may inſtruct us how we ought to comport ourſelves before Almighty God in Prayer, even as a blind perſon would do, if in the preſence of the King: He does not ſee him, but as ſoon as he is told the King is preſent, he puts himſelf, and remains in a reſpectful poſture. If the King does him the honour to call him, he approaches, and the firm belief that it is the King he ſpeaks to, hinders him from thinking of any thing elſe. He forms in his mind no other idea but that of the King, and is wholly attentive to him. So in like manner ought we to behave ourſelves in time of Prayer.

In that time our body muſt be compoſed in an humble manner, and our ſouls muſt come accompanied with faith, hope, and charity; theſe will put it in the poſture and ſituation which it ought to be in, in order to ſpeak and converſe with God.

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Being on our knees, we muſt adore God preſent, and offer ourſelves entirely to him, together with our Prayer; to his greater glory, and the accompliſhment of all his merciful deſigns over us, and for whatever other intention or perſon we deſign to offer it.

Then beg the grace of the Holy Ghoſt, through the merits of Chriſt, and of his Sacred ſpouſe the Bleſſed Virgin, and ſay, O my dear Jeſus, I give you my heart to praiſe, adore, and love you; and I unite it with your intentions and affections, make me partaker of them, I beſeech you.

We muſt always make two preludes; then Meditation, Affection, Reſolutions, and Colloquies, which together compoſe mental Prayer. The chief acts to be made in time of it are, Faith, Hope, Charity, Adoration, Admiration, Praiſe, Thankſgiving, Confidence, Contrition, Diffidence in ourſelves, Petition, and Reſolution.

SEC. VI.

After Prayer.

We muſt, for the ſpace of a *Miſerere* or two, reflect upon our Prayer, to ſee in

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in what we have been wanting. If we made our two preludes, and with what reſpect the firſt, and fervour the ſecond. Whether our memory did its duty by endeavouring to remember the ſubject we were to meditate upon. And if our underſtanding were not deficient in diſcourſing upon the matter; or whether we ſtrayed from it through negligence. If our will was not wanting in raiſing conformable affections. Laſtly, What fruit we drew from our meditation, and when, and how we ſhall practiſe it.

Then return thanks to the Divine Majeſty, for having permitted you to remain ſo long in his preſence; and for all the graces he has beſtowed upon you during that time. Beg pardon for all the faults you have committed, and the grace to practiſe what he has moved you to reſolve on; ſenſible that of yourſelf you can do nothing.

Whatever fault you are ſenſible you have committed, endeavour to amend it in your afternoon's meditation, which, generally ſpeaking, ſhould be a repetition of the morning one.

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SEC. VII.

Preludes which may ſerve for any Meditation.

1ſt Prelude. Imagine yourſelf at the feet of Jeſus crucified.

The 2d Prelude, Is to beg of our crucified Saviour, light to underſtand the truth propoſed, and the grace to form ſuch acts and reſolutions as may be moſt pleaſing to him, and conformable to his Divine Will; and may influence not only all the actions of the following day, but alſo of our whole life.

SEC. VIII.

A Second Manner when before the Bleſſed Sacrament.

The firſt Prelude is, To adore, with a firm Faith, Jeſus Chriſt preſent in the Bleſſed Sacrament, who, when on earth, taught us by his own example the virtue we are to meditate on; or elſe with his own mouth taught us the doctrine or truth propoſed.

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The ſecond Prelude is, To thank him for the example he gave us of it; and to beg he will pleaſe to give us light to underſtand it, and grace to practiſe it the remainder of our life.

SEC. IX.

A Third Manner.

The firſt Prelude is, To caſt a thought upon the whole ſubject of the Meditation.

The ſecond, To aſk of Almighty God, by a fervent aſpiration, the virtue we ſeek by it.

SEC. X.

A Compendium of mental Prayer.

1ſt, Preparation has three parts, preſence of God, choice of matter, and invocation.

2dly, Meditation has three parts, Conſideration, Affection, and Reſolution.

3dly, Concluſion has three parts, Thankſgiving, Oblation, and Petition.

SEC. XI.

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SEC. XI.

Different Manners of Meditating.

The firſt may be to reduce our Meditations to theſe three points. The firſt point propoſes the truth or precept. The ſecond point is to reflect on what is to be done to reduce this precept to practice. And the third point is Petition, by way of colloquy.

In the firſt point we muſt endeavour to imprint in our heart and mind the truth propoſed, weighing the motives, conceiving the importance, making upon it acts of faith, &c.

In the ſecond point we muſt reflect upon the different practices, and chuſe that which may beſt ſuit with our ſtate and condition; foreſeeing the different occaſions we ſhall have of practiſing it, and reſolving upon it, taking our meaſures accordingly.

The third point is, Prayer or Petition, which muſt come from the heart, and this not only during the time of meditation, but from time to time the reſt of the day, which will ſerve not only to keep

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keep us in the preſence of God, but alſo will mind us of the reſolutions we made in Prayer.

SEC. XII.

A Second Manner of Prayer.

Is to reduce our Meditation to theſe four following points.

The 1ſt Point muſt be all the motives than can raiſe an eſteem or deſire of the virtue we meditate on.

The ſecond point is to reflect what one in our circumſtances would do, that was reſolved to obtain and practiſe that virtue.

The third point is to reflect whether we do ſo or no, and take a view of the faults we commit againſt it, with contrition for them.

The fourth point is to conſider what we will do hereafter; together with all the purpoſes relating to that virtue; and earneſtly beſeech Almighty God to grant us the grace of it.

SEC. XIII.

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SEC. XIII.

A Third Manner of Prayer, consisting in six Points.

1st Point, Is a simple view of the truth we are to meditate on, putting it before the eye of our mind, and by an act of faith believing it to be such as it is revealed to us.

2d Point, Is Consideration upon the same matter.

3d Point, Consists in Affections of the will.

4th Point, In Reflections on ourselves.

5th Point, In Resolutions.

And the 6th Point, In Petitions.

SEC. XIV.

A fourth Manner of Prayer when we meditate on a Command, Precept, or any Obligation.

1st Point, Is to consider the nature of it, and in what it obliges.

2d Point, How we have observed it, and in what we have violated it.

3d Point,

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3d Point, Is to be ſorry for the faults we have committed, and conclude with colloquies, heartily begging it of Almighty God, and beſeeching our Lady to obtain it for us.

SEC. XV.

A fifth Manner, when we make our Meditation upon ſome Virtue.

1ſt Point, Is to give thanks for the example Chriſt has given us of that virtue in himſelf and in his Saints.

2d Point, Is to beg light to know the neceſſity, excellency, and advantages of it, and how we ſhould practiſe it; taking a view of our faults againſt it.

3d Point, Is to purpoſe amendment, marking the time, place, and occaſion of practiſing it, concluding with one or two colloquies.

The ſame is to be obſerved in meditating upon any ſentence or maxim, for either it contains ſome virtue to be embraced, or ſome vice to be avoided.

If a virtue, 1ſt. its Nature; 2d. its Qualities; 3d. the Example of thoſe who have excelled in it; and 4th. the contrary vice.

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If a Vice, 1ſt. its Nature; 2d. its Cauſes; 3d. its Effects; 4th. the Wrong it does to God.

SEC. XVI.

A ſixth Manner, conſidering the Faculties of our ſoul, or ſenſes of our body.

1ſt Point, To reflect on the uſe of thoſe Faculties.

2d Point, To ſee if we make that uſe of them.

3d Point, To aſk pardon and purpoſe amendment, concluding with colloquies.

SEC. XVII.

A very profitable way of meditating by conſideration of a Crucifix.

Firſt imagine yourſelf at the foot of our Saviour's Croſs, and having adored him, and proſtrated yourſelf in mind before him, lift up your eyes and conſider his five wounds.

At the right hand repaſs in your mind all the benefits you have received from his infinite bounty; they are the purchaſe of the Blood that runs from the Sacred Wound; thank the Divine Author.

At

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At the left hand, consider the adversities and afflictions, which by his providence have happened to you; express your grief for not having received them, as coming from his sacred hand, with due patience and resignation. Beg grace to do better for the future.

At the right foot, consider the good works you have done by means of the grace purchased for you by the merits of that Sacred Wound; see if they are full, done with a pure intention, and consider what good you might have done, and have not, because you would not.

At the left foot, consider how injurious you have been to that Sacred Wound, in the many sins you have committed against God, your neighbour, and yourself, all which has pierced that foot you behold, and caused him more pain than the nail. Beg pardon and grace to amend.

At the Sacred Wound of the side, see what your desires and love are; then at least open your heart, and fetch out of it affections of sorrow, love, and gratitude.

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SEC. XVIII.

Another Manner.

After having proſtrated yourſelf at the feet of Jeſus, and paid him your reſpects, lift up your eyes, and conſider all the parts of his Sacred Body one after another.

Then think of the pain and dolour he ſuffered in that part; as for example, in his hands, and that for the love of you. That thought will produce affections of ſorrow, compaſſion, thanks, love, &c.

Then caſt your eyes on your own hands, and conſider the ſins you have committed with them. Grieve, beg pardon, and purpoſe amendment.

Foreſee the acts of virtue which you may perform with your hands for the love of Jeſus, and purpoſe to do ſo in the firſt occaſion. Beg the God of bounty to favour you with his grace.

After this manner you may paſs over all the parts of his Sacred Body, making the ſame reflections, and reciting a *Pater* and *Ave* after each.

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SEC. XIX.

A Manner.

Which is by a ſimple view of the Myſteries of our Saviour's Life. As this is moſt eaſy, ſo it is moſt devout. You need only run over our Lord's life, ſtopping at the principal parts, and making acts of Faith, Adoration, Love, Contrition, Thanks, Offering, Petition, and Hope.

You muſt always obſerve the three following things: 1ſt, Not to look on the Myſtery you meditate upon as paſt, but preſent, ſince it is ſo in the idea of God; and though the action is paſt, the virtue of it is not, nor the love with which Chriſt wrought it; for his love is infinite, immutable, and ever the ſame; and as ardent now, as when he gave his Life and Blood, being ſtill ready to do the ſame if it were neceſſary.

2dly, If you find in any one myſtery wherewithal to entertain yourſelf devoutly, go no further, but remain therein as long as your devotion laſts.

3dly, After each Myſtery ſay a *Pater* and *Ave*.

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In all Meditations the memory muſt remember the matter, and repreſent the points to the underſtanding according to the manner we have prepared them, making an Act of Faith touching the truth contained in them; then the underſtanding conſiders the perſons, the nature, the place, the time, the end, the means, and the manner. And the will produces proper acts and affections.

SEC. XX.

To perform an Act of Thankſgiving well.

We muſt conſider the perſon that beſtows the gift, who is a God of an infinite dignity. 2dly, On whom he beſtows it, to wit, on a poor miſerable creature. 3dly, The value of the gift. 4thly, The love with which it is given. 5thly, The diſintereſtedneſs of the giver.

Then we muſt unite our thankſgiving with that which Chriſt in this world rendered to his eternal Father, for all favours beſtowed on him, and on us all; and which he daily continues to render him in the moſt Bleſſed Sacrament.

SEC.

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SEC. XXI.

The Manner of making Colloquies in Prayer.

A Colloquy is nothing elſe but a ſerious treaty with Almighty God, our Bleſſed Lady, any Saint, or our Angel Guardian, wherein the ſoul uſes all the arguments ſhe can to move and incline God, or his Saints, to be propitious to her; to which ſhe is excited by her extreme need, and invited to have recourſe to his Divine Majeſty by theſe kind invitations. *Come to me all you that labour, &c. Knock, and it ſhall be opened, &c. Come and buy of me burning gold; come and you ſhall have it gratis. My delights are to be with the children of men. When I ſhall be exalted, I will draw all to myſelf.* All which evidently ſhews that God is deſirous to give audience to a ſoul, if ſhe humbly ſues for it. 1ſt, In pleading, our firſt argument may be drawn from God himſelf, or from his power.

You can, O my God, do whatſoever you will. Were I able to effect that which you can by your will alone, I would inſtantly make myſelf wholly

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yours, and remain ſo for ever: ſhall I ſay this with truth, and yet be refuſed and rejected by you, when I know that you deſire it more than I do? My God, I beſeech you, break through thoſe impediments which part us; and once for all make room for your mercies, and poſſeſs my ſoul now at leaſt as you do the ſouls of your Elect.

2. A ſecond way to move God to ſhew mercy to us, may be to expoſe to him our miſeries, moving him to it after this manner.

If your mercy, my God, requires miſery to cure, that you may ſhew the bowels of your compaſſion, who, alas! more miſerable than I, that am miſery itſelf, both in ſoul and body. Behold, therefore, in me an ample ſubject for your mercy to work on, for miſery is the proper object of mercy.

3. A third means to move his Divine Majeſty may be drawn from the natural inclination he has to do good to all. Beſeech him to follow that inclination in your regard, ſince he is ſo much inclined to it; and his treaſures, neither of light nor heat, will be diminiſhed by his vouch-

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vouchſafing to enkindle that black coal yourſelf with the ſame.

4. A fourth means may be taken from the merits of Chriſt in this manner.

I do not deny, my God, that I have offended you, and that I deſerve nothing but darkneſs and deſtruction. But is it poſſible that my ſins, how many or great ſoever they be, can anyways counterpoiſe the merits of my Saviour? Be pleaſed, therefore, to lay my ſins, for which I deſerve your wrath, in the balance againſt his merits, and you will ſee how much they out-weigh my crimes. Did I believe my ſins greater than your Goodneſs and Mercy, as Cain did, there might be reaſon to confound me; but I declare on the contrary that your Mercy is incomparably greater: Therefore I beg you to receive the merits of your Son, and diſcharge me of all my Debts and Sins; where elſe can I poſſibly go, and who can help me but you?

5. A fifth manner of pleading may be to ſhew the title we have to all the treaſures and merits of Chriſt's Life and Death, they being ours by his free gift. Let us reckon upon each of his Thoughts, Words, Deeds, Affections, Intentions, and

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and Motions, for the ſpace of thirty-three years: thoſe infinite treaſures he ſtored up for us. We may urge how little of any of them will ſerve our turn, ſeeing that one only thought of his, or tear, or word, is of an infinite value, and ſufficient for millions of ſouls. And to apply any of them to our neceſſities, there needs no more but one word, or *Fiat*, how eaſy then for him to do it!

6. We may make uſe of the merits of the Bleſſed Mother of God, producing all her titles of honour; thoſe in her Litanies are neareſt at hand, and full of ſolid arguments, either to incline herſelf, or her deareſt Son, to grant or favour our requeſt. Nothing will move more than the affections of her heart, eſpecially thoſe ſhe had when ſhe accompanied her Divine Son in his Sacred Paſſion, and ſtood by his croſs. With them we may buy of God what we ſtand in need of. It very much imports us to get her to plead our cauſe, for ſhe never intercedes in vain; becauſe ſhe can move her Son to apply his and the Saints merits to us, and thus enrich us if ſhe pleaſes.

7. Another manner to move God to help us, may be to alledge what we are of ourſelves,

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ourſelves, how unable to do any thing without the Divine aſſiſtance. Let us ſink into the very bottom of our own nothing, and ſet before the eyes of our Lord, or his Mother, or his Saints, (according to the colloquy we make) the whole ſtate of our ſoul, telling them how things go with us, and leading them through the powers of our ſoul, as thro' an hoſpital, letting them ſee how impoſſible it is for us to recover or ſubſiſt without their help, and what a fair occaſion they have to ſhew their charity, their power, and their ſkill, perhaps not the like again in the whole world.

Here is to be noted, that in treating thus with our Lord, with his Mother, or with his Saints, many things may occur by way of objection, which may perhaps daunt or diſcourage a poor ſoul, if they be not well anſwered. As the memory of her many ſins, her great ingratitude, her fair promiſes without effect, her extreme tepidity, and ſloth in ſetting hand to work, ſome habitual imperfections of long continuance, which ſhe ſeeks not to amend, or gives over as deſperate; her diffidence in God's goodneſs, her want of a lively faith, a certain imagination that

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that God hears her not, a hard conceit of God, &c.

If God objects theſe things, and complains that you have tied his hands, your anſwer muſt be, that he knows that none has the power to do it unleſs he himſelf will. And that you will not allow, till ſuch time as it ſhall appear, that you can be more wicked than he is good, which is impoſſible.

It much imports us to conceive his infinite goodneſs bent and inclined to do good by its own nature. This confidence in God is of great advantage to a ſoul; for when once this virtue enlarges, and extends itſelf ſo far as to be, as it were, ſure that God will not fail to give her that which ſhe aſks, this is ever a kind of obtaining the very thing deſired.

We muſt be convinced that Almighty God, by his own nature, is infinitely liberal; and is delighted to have his children conſtrain him, as it were, by their importunities, to grant that which he ſo much deſires to give. He would have us eſteem ourſelves his children, nay his darling children, to whom he will refuſe nothing that may be for their good.

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To conclude, theſe things here ſet down may ſerve a ſoul very much in Prayer. They are inſinuated to open a way as it were, and ſhew in what manner it may be effected. They are alſo of a moſt excellent uſe in time of darkneſs and deſolation, and will bring much ſuccour and relief for the enabling poor creatures to go through ſuch dryneſs and diſcomforts as ſometimes it pleaſes Almighty God to permit a ſoul to feel.

SEC. XXII.

Some methods which may ſerve in deſolation and dryneſs, to prevent loſing one's time.

1ſt. Is that which Saint Thereſia uſed in the beginning of her application to Prayer, being eaſy and profitable. It is to read a little in a ſpiritual book; then pauſe a while to imprint it in your mind, and endeavour to draw ſome good affections and reſolutions from it.

2d. Is almoſt like the firſt, and is recommended by St. Ignatius. Take ſome ſentence of Scripture, or any vocal Prayer. As the *Pater*, *Ave*, *Credo*, and ſay it leiſurely, either vocally or in your heart; ſtay

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ſtay upon each word as long as you find the affections or ſentiments of piety, which it raiſes in your mind, entertain you. At the end beg ſome grace or virtue conformable to what you have meditated.

3. A third way is, when the ſubject prepared, furniſhes not entertainment enough, to fall into ſome acts, as faith, adoration, thankſgiving, hope, love, &c. which may be made in ſhort and pathethic words, ſtaying upon each as long as it gives any entertainment.

4. A fourth, which is of uſe when you cannot meditate, or raiſe any affections on the prepared points. In this ſterility you may proteſt to Almighty God, that you deſire to make as many acts of virtue as you ſhall fetch your breath. Offer his Divine Majeſty, in lieu of what you are not able to do, that honour which is rendered him by the Saints in Heaven, and by all his Servants upon earth, eſpecially what they render him at that preſent time.

5. A fifth is an application of mind, to Jeſus in the Bleſſed Sacrament, which may be done thus: firſt adore our Saviour in

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in this Divine Myſtery, with all the reſpect his preſence requires.

2dly, Unite yourſelf to him, and to all his Divine operations in the euchariſt, where he inceſſantly adores, loves, and praiſes his Eternal Father in the name of all men, in quality of a victim that is continually ſacrificed. Reflect on his recollection, ſolitude, hidden life, obedience, humility, patience, reſolve, and beg grace to imitate him in occaſions. 3dly, Offer this worthy victim to the Eternal Father, thereby to render him the ſovereign homage you owe him, and to return him worthy thanks for all benefits received, and to ſatisfy his juſtice, and oblige his mercies. 4thly, Conclude by ſpiritual Communion.

This practice is an excellent manner of Prayer, which we ought to make familiar to us, ſince our happineſs in this life conſiſts in, and depends on, our union with Jeſus Chriſt in the Bleſſed Sacrament.

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CHAPTER II.

SEC. I.

Motives to raiſe in us a high eſteem of the Divine Office.

THE Divine Office is a manner of Prayer peculiar to Prieſts and Religious Perſons. It is ordained by the Holy Ghoſt, who governs the Church, for the employment of God's choſen people; that whilſt the reſt of men are employed in the various diſtractions of this life, they might be employed in praiſing, loving, thanking, and petitioning Almighty God, both for themſelves and for others.

Another deſign of our Holy Mother the Church in it, is to imitate the triumphant Church which has, for its continual occupation, to praiſe God in loving him, and to love him in praiſing him.

We ought then to perform it with all the reverence a creature can pay to her God; and with all the love a created heart can yield, that being the employment

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ment of Angels, and if we are not unhappy, will be ours for Eternity.

What a misery would it be if we should so perform what is ordained to gain our happiness withal, as to merit punishment; and in place of pleasing God, should offend him! for it is either a source of graces, or of misfortune, according as we perform it well or ill. What reward can we expect when the petitions we present are so delivered as to provoke God in place of pleasing him.

Saint Basil tells us the Divine assistance is not to be implored coldly, or with a wandering mind, for those that do so not only miss of the grant of their petitions, but incur his displeasure.

Saint Gregory assures us that God hears not the Prayers to which he who prays attends not: And the reason why so many Priests and Religious Persons remain still burdened with their defects, and make so little progress in perfection, often declining from bad to worse, is their performing this divine duty so negligently; for did they perform it as they ought, they would increase in grace, and thereby in all virtues and perfection.

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To perform as we ought, we muſt do it for God, in God, and with God. It is not ſufficient to be preſent in perſon, but the heart and ſoul with all our powers, muſt be applied to it; for not to perform it ſo, is to be rather *cryers* than *Prayers*.

We ought to look on the Divine Office as our greateſt daily duty and employment, impoſed on us by Supreme Power, and accepted of by us; ſo the performing it well, ſhould be our principal care.

The name it bears ſhews the excellence of it. It is firſt called *Divine*, becauſe it was inſpired by the Spirit of God, and inſtituted to praiſe and worſhip him. And ſecondly, it is called *Office*, becauſe it is the charge and office of Eccleſiaſtical and Religious Perſons, whom our Holy Mother the Church deputes as Embaſſadors from her to Almighty God; to praiſe, love, and thank him; to beg his pardon, help, and aſſiſtance; ſupply and atone for ſeveral of her children who neither love, ſerve, nor praiſe him; and alſo to imitate the triumphant Church.

We may look upon ourſelves not only as deputed by the Church, but alſo by our houſe and order, to praiſe God in the

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the name of them all; to beg pardon for their ſins and offences, and the continuation of his mercies, and of the graces that are neceſſary for each. Be perſuaded that part of the benedictions that God grants the order, are tied to the public Prayers performed in it. Our founders' deſign in obliging us to the Divine Office was, that thoſe Prayers ſhould have the force to draw God's Bleſſings on it; have we not then reaſon to reproach ourſelves that our negligent performing it is the cauſe, if God deprives the community of many graces and benedictions which he would otherways beſtow?

The Divine Office may be conſidered as a tribute which our tongue and heart pays to God; and that which ought to raiſe our eſteem of it is, that it is believed that Chriſt, when on earth, recited the Pſalter according to the cuſtom of the Jews: and when he was on the croſs he began the 12th Pſalm, *Deus, Deus meus ut quid dereliquiſti me,* according to opinion he entirely ended.

We cannot do better than to unite ourſelves to our Saviour, while we ſay or ſing the Divine Office, begging him to

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preſent our Prayers and Praiſes with his own to his Eternal Father for his glory and the good of the Church; and at the ſame time let us beg him, by his all adorable heart, to ſupply for all the faults we have committed and do commit therein. This he revealed to St. Mechtilda, and St. Gertrude was very pleaſing to him.

SEC. II.

Of the Remote Preparation for the Divine Office.

We perform the Divine Office ill, becauſe we do not prevent it by ſuch foreſeen conſiderations as might take up our thoughts, and ſtir us up to fervour and holy affections.

Though we cannot help being diſtracted, yet we may be faulty in the cauſe of the diſtractions, by omitting to diſpoſe ourſelves for Prayer. Yet no other preparation is required, but only as we go to the quire from the firſt ſtroke of the bell, to recollect and excite in ourſelves a reverential eſteem of the duty we are called to perform, which is to ſpeak to God, and that in the moſt ſacred place upon earth,

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earth, where God is preſent to give audience, and favour thoſe that pronounce his praiſes.

We may reflect as we go, what care a perſon that was to have audience of the King would take to prepare what he was to ſay. We are happily void of that trouble, for our Holy Mother the Church puts into our mouths the words we are to ſpeak, which are no other than the King's own words, to whom we are to ſpeak. It was his Holy Spirit that inſpired them; all he requires of us is, that our hearts join with the words, otherways his Divine Majeſty will have but little regard to the words we ſpeak, (though his own) unleſs he hears the cries of our hearts, by the deſire of pleaſing and honouring him.

To excite us to fervour for each part of the Office, we may, as we go to it, make uſe of theſe reflections. Going to *Mattins*, reflect with what fervour the ſame has been performed by ſeveral in the night; and if we are excuſed from performing it then, it is that we may do it with more fervour and alacrity, having had ſufficient ſleep; and as the deſign of riſing in the night to ſay it was, tha whilſt worldlings took their reſt, C

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Servants and Spouſes ſhould be employed in praiſing him, and atone for the ſins and offences committed againſt him during the night, ſo that thought ſhould ſtir us up to a fervorous performance of the ſame.

In going to *Prime*, let us raiſe in ourſelves a great deſire to perform it well, it being the firſt hour of the Day's Office, and may mind us of the firſt beginning of our life, from the time we had the uſe of reaſon, which ought to have been employed in ſerving God; and for not having done it, we muſt redouble our fervour, and enter into the ſentiments of the Church, who, by the Prayers of Prime, begs for all her children, that God would not only preſerve them from ſins, but conduct them, and teach them to obſerve all his commandments, and ſanctify their thoughts, words, and actions.

Tierce is particularly deſigned to render thanks to God for the ſanctification of the Church by means of the Holy Ghoſt, who deſcended viſibly upon the Apoſtles at that hour; and alſo to beg him to continue to animate it with his ano[illegible] Spirit.

When

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When called to the two laſt hours, excite yourſelf to ſentiments of gratitude, conſidering God's goodneſs to you in calling you from time to time to praiſe him: endeavour to do it with all imaginable fervour.

In going to Veſpers reflect on the hour when Chriſt gave the greateſt proof he could give of his love for us, by yielding up his life for our redemption, endeavour for to prove yours by a particular fervour in reciting this part of the Divine Office.

Complin being the concluſion of the Day's Office, ought to be performed with a double diligence, that it may atone for the faults we committed in the reſt of our Office; as alſo to prepare our hearts, by true devotion, to end the day piouſly.

Our intention muſt be pure, we muſt be carried to this Divine Service only by the motive of God's glory, and not for the ſenſible ſatisfaction which proceeds from ſo holy an action.

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SEC. III.

The immediate Preparation for the Divine Office.

As ſoon as we enter the quire we muſt, with profound reſpect, adore God really preſent in the moſt Bleſſed Sacrament, uniting our adorations with thoſe the Angels render him. Let us alſo offer him his own thoughts and divine operations, begging he will apply them to us, as he ſees moſt for his own Honour and our Sanctification.

Having made your intention before you begin, beg the grace of Prayer of Almighty God, and invoking the Divine Spirit to pray in you, ſay, open my lips O my God, that I may bleſs your Holy name, and purify my heart from all that tends not to your ſervice: enlighten my underſtanding, and inflame my will, that I may recite this office worthily, devoutly, and attentively, to the end I may deſerve to be graciouſly heard by your Divine Majeſty. I offer it united with the Prayers my Saviour offered you when in this world, and with thoſe he now renders

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ders you in the adorable Sacrament; and alſo with all thoſe that are rendered you by the Saints and Angels in Heaven, and by the Faithful upon earth; begging that the perfection of theirs may ſupply for the defects of mine.

In all vocal Prayers there are three ſorts of attention which we may have: the firſt may be called material, the ſecond ſpiritual, and the third Divine. The 1ſt is the leaſt, which is to have attention to pronounce the words well, without miſſing through want of attention, or confounding one with another through precipitation, which ſuffices to fulfil the obligation of them that are obliged to the Divine Office, though it renders but little glory to God, and brings ſmall profit to our ſouls. The 2d is to attend to the ſenſe of the words, and this is more perfect and agreeable to God, and more profitable to ourſelves, becauſe it excites holy affections. The 3d and moſt perfect keeps the ſoul applied to God, to whom ſhe ſpeaks, either by conſidering ſome of his Divine Perfections, or ſome Myſtery of our Saviour's Paſſion, ſo that the underſtanding admits of no other thought, nor the will of any

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any other affection, than to pleaſe, glorify, love, and thank God.

SEC. IV.

Several Manners of keeping our thought attentive to God during the Divine Office.

We may conſider the Divine Office, 1ſt, As a Sacrifice of praiſe and homage to God. 2dly, As a Sacrifice of thankſgiving. 3dly, As a Sacrifice of impetration. And 4thly, As a Sacrifice of propitiation. One day in one manner, and another day in another, as it ſhall ſtand with our preſent diſpoſition, and offering it up accordingly.

When we conſider it as a Sacrifice of praiſe and homage to God, we muſt reflect upon his infinite greatneſs. He is the Fountain of Sanctity, and requires to be continually praiſed and honoured by all his creatures with all imaginable Sanctity. It is him we praiſe in this Divine Duty, and we thereby ſay to him all he would have us ſay. May we alſo ſay it as he would have us, that is what we muſt endeavour.

Secondly,

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Secondly, We muſt reflect on the honour he does us, in not only permitting, but even calling us to praiſe him, which we ought to perform with all reſpect and fervour.

Thoſe two reflections ſhould make us perform the Divine Office with ſuch an aweful reverence as becomes a creature when ſhe ſpeaks to her God and Creator.

At every *Gloria Patri*, we muſt redouble our attention, and with all reſpect adore that Divine *Being*. One in Eſſence and three in Perſons, from which all creatures receive theirs. We may alſo in reciting it reflect what thoſe words import, to wit, that God may enjoy the ſame glory he had from all eternity, and will eternally have, which teaches us how great and independent of any creature God's glory is, and that the greateſt honour we can render him cannot go beyond wiſhing that it may be as it was from all Eternity.

When we conſider the Office as a Sacrifice of Thankſgiving, we muſt firſt offer it for that intention, and during the time of it call to mind all the effects of God's Mercies and Liberalities to ourſelves, and to the community we live in:

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and ſo make of thoſe praiſes a Sacrifice of Thankſgiving for the ſame. And this becauſe it is an eſſential duty to thank God for his favours, and we have not otherways time to employ ourſelves therein as we ought.

When we conſider it as a Sacrifice of Impetration, we muſt offer it as ſuch, making choice of one thing, or many which we find the greateſt want of, and are moſt moved to ſeek and find redreſs for. Our hearts, during the time, muſt, in the humbleſt and ſimpleſt manner, repreſent the ſame to God, whilſt, with our mouths, we pronounce the Divine Office, which is appointed by the Church to beg of Almighty God, all that is neceſſary for her and for her children.

When we conſider it as a Sacrifice of Propitiation, after having offered it as ſuch, we muſt, during the time of it, raiſe in ourſelves a lively apprehenſion of the greatneſs and multitude of our offences, which, according to the Pſalmiſt, are more in number than the hairs of our head. Secondly, We muſt reflect on the Mercies of God, by which he pardons more willingly than he puniſhes; taking a pleaſure to pardon ſuch as with

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ſorrow for having offended him, have recourſe to him: let us conceive a hearty ſorrow for all our offences againſt him.

Sometimes we may entertain our thoughts, during the Divine Office, with theſe three reflections, or with one of them, according as we find ourſelves moved. 1ſt, God's Charity, by which he loves himſelf with an infinite love; and then his creatures, communicating himſelf to them a thouſand ways. 2dly, God's Juſtice, which cauſes him not to leave the leaſt fault unpuniſhed, nor the leaſt virtue unrewarded. 3dly, His admirable and hidden Providence by which he governs all things, and conducts them to their end; extending itſelf even to a leaf, and to a hair of the head, being preſent to all.

At another time we may entertain our thoughts with Chriſt preſent in the Bleſſed Sacrament. It is his proper Throne upon earth, where he ſeats his Holy Humanity to receive our homages. The honour we here render him ought to anſwer the opprobies and ignomies he received for us on the croſs.

We cannot do better, during the Divine Office, than to keep ourſelves united

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to him, joining our thoughts and affections to his, begging him to preſent them to his Eternal Father, ſaying rather with heart than mouth, at the end of each Pſalm or hour, I beſeech you, dear Lord, to unite my unworthy Prayers with yours, and to preſent them ſo united to the glory of your Eternal Father.

At other times, according to the Feaſt we ſolemnize; we may entertain our thoughts in reflecting on God's Love, expreſt to us in that Myſtery, moving ourſelves to ſentiments of love and gratitude for the ſame, and offering ourſelves to his Divine Majeſty in return, or whatever we think he may require of us; and begging that the merits of that myſtery may be applied to us.

We may alſo ſometimes entertain ourſelves during the Office with the matter contained in the ſeven Petitions of the *Pater Noſter*, we may uſe one of them for ſo long as we find guſt and ſatisfaction therein; or may change weekly, daily, or at every hour of the Office as they ſtand in order, for the number will correſpond either to the days of the week or hours of the Office.

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The ſame method we may obſerve if we take for ſubject of our thoughts the ſeven words our Saviour ſpoke on the croſs; which would be a fit entertainment for Fridays.

As many reflections may rather charge the imagination than help attention, it is more adviſable to let our ſoul ſweetly move towards God, making uſe of any one reflection which may keep us attentive to him, for as long as we find it does ſo. It were even to be wiſhed that the whole Divine Office were but one Act of Love.

Notwithſtanding it is adviſable, and even neceſſary, to make choice of ſome one reflection or more, which may reſtrain and fix our vagabond imagination, it will coſt us ſome pains to accuſtom ourſelves to it; but it is a pain well beſtowed and full of merit, being taken to glorify God with more reverence and attention.

On Feaſts of our Bleſſed Lady, we may entertain our thoughts during the Office with ſome of thoſe elogiums in her Litanies, or elſe with the words of the Angelical Salutation, Chap. v. Sec. 2, uſing one of thoſe reflections during the

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whole Office, or changing at each hour, as ſuits beſt with our preſent devotion and diſpoſition.

When we have ended the Divine Office, we ſhould always reflect a little how we have performed it; and beg pardon for the faults and negligences we have been guilty of, and grace to perform it better the next time. In ſatisfaction for our faults we ſhould ſay the Prayer ordained by Pope Leo X. or elſe that which follows:

O Good Jeſus, be propitious to me a ſinner. I recommend to your heart, full of ſweetneſs and charity, the Office I have now recited with ſo much tepidity, and ſo many diſtractions. Be pleaſed to pardon the faults I have therein committed, and to ſupply for my defect accept of your own merits, which I offer you, and in which I put my total truſt and confidence.

In order to ſatisfy ourſelves, we muſt underſtand, that although our minds ſhould be ſo taken up with any of the foregoing reflections, or any ſuch like pious thoughts, for many Pſalms together, ſo as not to reflect on the Pſalm, yet provided we ſay it, we ſhould fulfil

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our obligation, and that with more perfection than if we only attended to them.

A ſervant of God uſed, at the end of every *Gloria Patri*, to add theſe words, *Pater Cœleſtis da mihi Spiritum bonum.* Celeſtial Father, give me your Holy Spirit.

CHAP. III.

SEC. I.

Motives to incline us to frequent viſits of the moſt Bleſſed Sacrament.

ST. Thereſia appearing to one after her death ſaid, that Chriſt ſhould be to us in the Bleſſed Sacrament what the Divine Eſſence is to the Bleſſed in Heaven, whoſe whole occupation is to contemplate, adore, and love, ſo ſhould we comport ourſelves to Jeſus on our Altars.

Love and gratitude to Chriſt, whoſe love for us makes him remain conſtantly in our Tabernacle, ſhould draw us continually to him. We may look on the Altar as the place where he every day is born, dies, and is offered in Sacrifice for us, applying unto us the fruits of the Blood he has ſhed for us.

Our

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Our frequent viſiting him in this his Throne of love is highly pleaſing to him, becauſe we comply with his deſire, not an ordinary deſire, but a vehement, ardent, paſſionate one, which he expreſſes by his remaining continually with us, and declaring that his delights are to be with the children of men. Ought not we then to delight in frequently viſiting him who, for our ſakes, deſcends from Heaven to earth, and that ſo frequently? What great matter is it for us to go from our cells, or from any part of the houſe to viſit him, when not hindered by any regular duty?

The Queen of Saba thought it worth her pains to come even from the extremities of the earth, to hear the wiſdom of Solomon; and ſhall we think much of going a few ſteps to viſit Chriſt our Saviour, who remains in our Tabernacle for our ſakes? If we are aſſiduous in viſiting him, we ſhall undoubtedly receive from him what that Queen received from Solomon, of whom it is ſaid that *He gave her all that ſhe aſked, or would.* Reflect a little on thoſe words *aſked, or would,* and conſider what an advantage you may make by viſiting him.

What

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What could move Chriſt, after he had perfectly accompliſhed the work of our Redemption, to remain ſtill upon earth? nothing but his love and tenderneſs for us, whom he knew to ſtand in need of him, as being ſick, weak, afflicted, fearful of his judgements; and therefore he would ſtay with us that we might find in him a Father to comfort us, a Phyſician to cure us, a Maſter to teach us, and clear our doubts; a Redeemer to ſave us; are we not then infinitely blameable if we make not this uſe of him?

Before the coming of Chriſt, would any one have thought it poſſible that a God ſo great and dreadful, who was then called the God of vengeance, ſhould, out of his pure love to us, not only become man like us, but alſo make himſelf our food and nouriſhment? if this be aſtoniſhing, as indeed it is, it is not leſs wonderful that we ſhould be ſo inſenſible and ungrateful as to go ſeldom near him, when we might do it with ſo much facility.

Had it been in our choice to have aſked ſome favour, or mark of Chriſt's love and goodneſs for us, could we have preſumed to have aſked ſuch a favour as his

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his remaining for ever with us? but what we ſhould not have dared to aſk, he has had the goodneſs to do, knowing how neceſſary his preſence was for us; which makes our ungratefulneſs in viſiting him ſeldom appear the more.

What excuſe can there be for religious perſons, lodged under the ſame roof with Chriſt, if they do not frequently viſit him, they having ſo many fair opportunities of doing it, and neglecting the ſame, is the reaſon why they do but creep, as it were, in the way of perfection; becauſe that is, of all others, the moſt powerful means to bring them to it, and that means they neglect. A religious man confeſs'd that nothing more ſenſibly afflicted him at his death than this.

As there is nothing more beneficial to us than frequently to viſit the Bleſſed Sacrament, ſo there is no Devotion more pleaſing to Almighty God, than our coming to viſit and adore him in that his throne of love, which if we are careful to do, we may be aſſured we ſhall, thro' the merits of Chriſt, continue the ſame for all eternity.

There are an infinity of motives which oblige us frequently to viſit Chriſt in the moſt

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moſt Bleſſed Sacrament, yet they may be contained in theſe few words, *We can do nothing without him; and with him we can do all things.*

SEC. II.

On viſiting the moſt Bleſſed Sacrament.

It will be better and more profitable to our ſouls to make fewer viſits to the Bleſſed Sacrament, (as three a day) and ſpend in each half a quarter of an hour, than to pretend to make more, and make them in a hurry. The propereſt time for them will be one in the morning, another in the afternoon, and the third before night. And, as much as may be, we ſhould be conſtant to the time, unleſs for ſome juſt cauſe we are obliged to advance or defer our viſits.

It is the pious practice of many, before they begin their prayers, to addreſs themſelves to their good Angel, begging him to join with them, and help them to pray well, which we may do in theſe or the like words:

O bleſſed Angel, my faithful Guardian, you know much better than I, what reſpect

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ſpect and reverence is due to my Divine Saviour in this Sacrament of love; you alſo know my obligations to him. I beg you to act the part of the beſt of friends to me, by requeſting for me all I ſtand in need of, helping me to petition the ſame, and ſupplying for all my defects. Obtain my Saviour's bleſſing on my poor endeavours, that they may ſucceed to his honour and glory, and the good of my ſoul.

SEC. III.

Manner of viſiting the moſt Bleſſed Sacrament for every day of the week.

On Sunday the firſt viſit.

Conſider Chriſt in the Bleſſed Sacrament as your Saviour. Reflect how many ways he has been a Saviour to you. Nothing is more powerful to gain our hearts than this amiable name, and the firm perſuaſion that he will be a Saviour to us. Therefore the enemy labours to make us doubt of it, thereby to diminiſh his love in us.

Our Holy Mother the Church aſſures us that he died for the Salvation of all.

With

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With what love will this assurance inflame your heart! make an Act of Faith upon this truth, and say,

O my God, I firmly believe that you truly desire my salvation, and died for it. Nothing shall ever make me doubt thereof. Since then you so much desire it, I confide you will grant me all that is necessary for it, and above all your love. For the hell you threaten me with, if I don't love you, has nothing in it so dreadful as that want of your love. Nor the Heaven you have prepared for me, if I do love you, has nothing in it so delightful as that love. Grant me but your love, and I desire no more. And since the accomplishing of your will, and observing your precepts, is the rule you give me of shewing my love, I beg your grace that I may be exact in every point of the same, that there I may truly prove I love you. Increase your love daily in me, I beseech you; and if I am not worthy to die of it, at least I beg I may be so happy as to die in it, and that my last breath may be an act of love to you.

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After which, make these following Acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity.

My God, I firmly believe all that faith teaches me concerning your being an infinite good and infinite in all perfections, and I believe that I owe you all my love, all I am, and all I am capable of.

I hope and expect from your infinite goodness and mercy, the remission of all my sins, and all the graces I stand in need of to remain for ever faithful to your love, and to overcome all your enemies and mine.

An Act of charity after these two will be easily made: No matter in how few words exprest, provided it comes from the heart.

Then communicate Spiritually.

Though it be less efficacious than to do it Sacramentally, yet the good it procures us is so considerable, that we cannot omit it without doing a great prejudice to our own souls, for by it God bestows great graces on them.

If

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If intereſt did not engage us as often as we viſit the Bleſſed Sacrament, to receive Chriſt ſpiritually, love ought to do it: Since he remains there for our ſakes, and expreſſes the deſire he has that we receive him. To comply with it, we muſt diſpoſe ourſelves by an act of humility, and of contrition for our heart by an inflamed deſire to receive him, that he may enter and we be united to him.

After which ſay the following Prayer, which St. Gertrude daily recited in honour of the Heart of Jeſus.

I adore you, O Sacred Heart of Jeſus, Source of Eternal Life, Treaſure of the Divinity, Furnace of Love. You are my only Refuge! O amiable Saviour, inflame my Heart with that love which yours is inflamed with. Pour into my Heart thoſe graces, of which yours is the Source; and grant that my Heart may be ſo united with yours, that your will may be mine, and that mine may be eternally conformed to yours; which from henceforward I beg may be the rule of all my deſires and actions.

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The ſecond Viſit for the ſame Day.
In the Spirit of Confidence.

Go to your Saviour with ſentiments of an entire confidence; as to the certain remedy of all your evils, and ſource of all your good; for whatever ſituation or ſtate your ſoul is in, you will draw great advantage if you thus viſit him. Our Holy Father ſays there is no mortal ſin, however horrible, which the death of Jeſus cannot blot out. I cannot, ſays the ſame Saint, be frightened at the multitude of my Sins, if I call to mind the death of Chriſt, for that can do more for me than my ſins can do againſt me. In all my adverſities, ſays he, I never found a more efficacious remedy than to have recourſe to the wounds of my Saviour, in them I repoſe without fear.

We cannot entertain ourſelves better, nor pleaſe our Saviour more, than by exciting in ourſelves a perfect confidence in him, aſking it of him, and a heart conformable to his, that may always truſt and confide in him.

Having excited yourſelf to this confidence, make the acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity,

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Charity, then Spiritual Communion. And St. Gertrude's Prayer as in the firſt Viſit.

The third Viſit for the ſame Day, which may likewiſe ſerve for the third Viſit of every Day.

It is to confer with our Saviour about all our affairs.

Go to Jeſus in the moſt Bleſſed Sacrament, to open your heart to him, and to tell him all your concerns, as to your Father and beſt of friends. Speak to him of your ſpiritual concerns, and likewiſe of your temporal ones, for he is not tired with hearing our complaints and miſeries.

Speak to him of what paſſes in your interior. Of the ſins and faults you commit, notwithſtanding your purpoſes to the contrary. Of the violent propenſions of your corrupt nature, which cauſes many evils. Of the paſſions and inclinations which trouble you, &c. And you will doubtleſs experience the ſame goodneſs which they did, who addreſſed themſelves to Chriſt for their bodily maladies when he was upon earth. Say to

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him with the leper, *Lord, if you will you can cure me.*

If any one has offended you, tell him of it, and learn of him how to comport yourſelf towards the perſon. If any particular thing is to be done, conſult with him about it; beg his aſſiſtance and bleſſing on it. And when ended, if it ſucceed, thank him for it, and render him all the glory of it. If it did not ſucceed, make to him an entire ſacrifice of your will and deſires, ſubmitting yourſelf to his will, and judging that to be beſt which he ordains; which if you really do, you will gain more than if it had ſucceeded to your mind.

If you find yourſelf oppreſs'd with melancholy, or if any afflicting accident has happened to you, or any temptation, have recourſe to Jeſus, ſeek your ſolace and comfort in him alone, and tell him you expect help from no other.

Finally, in all your difficulties, have recourſe to him.

Acts

Acts of Faith, Hope, Charity, ſpiritual Communion; and as before, after the firſt Viſit.

SEC. IV.

On Monday the firſt Viſit.

Go to Jeſus in the Bleſſed Sacrament as to your Paſtor. Conſider the love he expreſſes for each of his flock, how he ſeeks to maintain their lives, and make them happy. He aſſures us that he loves us as his Father loves him. Aſk him, but aſk it from your heart, that you and all the community may for ever be of the number of his ſheep.

Grant, dear Lord, this favour, ſince I am ſure you deſire it; content then this your deſire by granting it. It is what I confide, and hope you will; and let not the force of our common enemy take any of us out of your hands. Reform, dear Lord, the deformity of my ſoul, and no longer ſuffer any thing to remain in me that diſpleaſes you. Employ me according to your merciful deſigns over me, and give me the grace promptly to conform

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form myſelf to them, and to ſanctify myſelf, and thoſe that are under my charge, by perfectly fulfilling all the duties of my employment, to the greater glory of your name.

Inſpire me with thoſe ſentiments of love and tenderneſs for each, which may reſemble that you have for them; that after having laboured with you on earth for their Salvation, I may, for recompence, enjoy you for ever in heaven. *Amen.*

Acts of Faith, Hope, Charity, as before.

The ſecond Viſit on the ſame Day in the Spirit of Zeal.

Your Sacred heart, dear Jeſus, in this adorable Sacrament, burns with an inexplicable love for all men; and therefore I am perſuaded that I cannot pleaſe you more, than in petitioning you in favour of miſerable ſinners, whom your enemy holds under the Captivity of ſin, and in imploring your mercy for Hereticks ignorant of our faith. Remember, Lord, that they are the work of your hands, and created to your image and likeneſs.

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likeneſs. Hell is filled with them to the diſhonour of your name, though you have ſhed your blood and died for their ſalvation. Dear Lord, let yourſelf be overcome by the Prayers of our Holy Mother the Church. Forget and forgive their ſins and infidelities, and in ſatisfaction, receive all you ſuffered for them on the Croſs. Grant them the ſpirit of penance, and grace to amend their lives, and to love and ſerve you the reſt of their days.

I alſo petition your mercy in favour of the poor ſouls whom you love ſo tenderly, and ſo much deſire their ſolace. They being detained in purgatory, are hindered from loving and glorifying you, as they would if they were in Heaven. It is on that account I beg their deliverance, and to obtain it I offer you all the merits of your Paſſion and Death, and the precious Blood you have ſhed for them, which I adore in this Divine Sacrament.

There is not a more efficacious means to partake of God's liberalities than to preſs him for our neighbour, whether living or dead; ſo charitable a proceeding opens the heart and hand of God, to repleniſh us with his graces and bleſſings.

Acts

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Acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity, as above.

Third Visit as above also.

SEC. III.

Tuesday—First Visit.

Go to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, as to your Judge. Tell him the terror you have of being judged, not knowing whether you are worthy of his love or hatred; not being certain if you love him as he requires of you. But tell him, if to be of the number of his friends, it is sufficient truly to desire to be so, you have some reason to hope you are, since you really desire to love him above all things.

But, dear Lord, whether my heart will remain constant to your love, to my last breath, is what I am not certain of; the uncertainty of which makes me tremble. It is you only that can give me that assurance, by giving me such a love that no waters of tribulation may extinguish.

It is to obtain that favour of your mercies that I approach your Holy Altar, which

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which is properly the tribunal of thoſe mercies, thereby to be enabled to appear with aſſurance before the tribunal of your juſtice. Here in place of bidding me retire, you ordain me to approach, ſaying, *Come to me all you that are burdened with the heavy weight of your ſins, and I will eaſe and refreſh you.*

Acts of Faith, &c. as above.

Second Viſit for the ſame Day.
In the Spirit of Love.

Go to Jeſus in the Bleſſed Sacrament to expreſs your love to him, for the many marks he gives you of his, eſpecially this of remaining for ever with you. Beg him to inſpire you with ſentiments of his love, worthy of himſelf. If you find your heart ſo dry that you cannot make ſuch an act of love as you wiſh to do, offer him all the love with which he is loved by all the Bleſſed of Heaven.

It will be time well ſpent if you employ yourſelf in begging of him the grace to love him and his eternal Father perfectly in this life, and eternally in the next. But aſk it with an entire confi-

dence,

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dence, not doubting to experience the truth of his words, who assures us that if we ask we shall receive.

Grant then, dear Jesus, that I may love you in this Sacrament, as much as I am beloved by you. Be wholly yours, as you are wholly mine. Hear my Prayers—pity my Sighs—hearken to my Petition. You command me to love you. Alas! you know my weakness and incapacity to do it as I ought. Give then what you command, and command what you please. Employ your omnipotent hand to destroy whatever opposes it in me, as self-love, which I beg you to annihilate in me, that your love alone may reign in my heart.

Acts of Faith, Hope, &c. as above.

Third Visit as before.

SEC. VI.

Wednesday—First Visit.

Go to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament as to your Lord and Sovereign, whose power is infinite, he can with all imagi-

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nable eaſe do whatever he will, for to *will* and to *do* is the ſame thing with God. Rejoice thereat, and that his goodneſs is equal to his power.

Dear Lord, what comfort for my poor ſoul, which you ſeem to have created ſo miſerable, only that you might have the ſatisfaction to draw me out of it, and to ſhew your mercy to me. Behold then all my miſeries and neceſſities; ſee how I am ſurrounded with enemies without and within, by my Paſſions and vicious inclinations which tyranniſe over me. Behold ſufficient matter both for your power and mercy to work upon; for no leſs a power than yours can change me from what I am to what I ought to be; nor can a leſs mercy will it: Say but the word, and I ſhall be victorious, and for ever happy.

Acts of Faith, Hope, &c. as above.

The ſecond Viſit for the ſame Day.

By way of amorous Complaints.

How comes it, dear Lord, ſince you are ſo merciful as to remain conſtantly on our Altar to do me good, that I am ſtill

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what I am, poor, and in want of all things? It muſt be that I know not how to make uſe of ſo powerful a means as I have in you; for in you is contained a remedy for all my evils. You are that Phyſician whoſe power and ſkill cures all diſeaſes. If then I am ſtill ſick and wounded, the fault muſt be my own, ſince you are willing to cure me. Teach me, dear Lord, where it lies, that knowing it I may correct it.

It is not that I am ignorant of your love and tenderneſs for me, and conſequently have but ſmall confidence in you, though you remain for ever here that I may find in you a powerful Protector, a Father, a Phyſician, and the beſt of friends. Make me then know you better that I may love you more; for to love you but little is not to know you; and knowing you, may I confide in you, and make recourſe to you in all my neceſſities.

Acts

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Acts of Faith, Hope, &c. as above.
Third Visit as above also.

SEC. VII.

Thursday—First Visit.

Go to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, as to the Soul's Food in life, and viaticum at death. This Divine Food comes from Heaven, and will conduct us thither.

Good God, is it possible that the recompence of Saints, the joy of Angels, the Eternal Word should make himself the Food and Nourishment of my soul! What can I desire more? Nothing, dear Lord, but that I may correspond with such a love, and ever worthily dispose myself to receive you, until I happily arrive to you, for the strength of this Divine Sacrament can make me walk in the way of perfection during life, and open to me the gate of Heaven at my death.

Grant, dear Lord, that your presence in this adorable Sacrament, at the hour of my death, may dissipate all fears which the enemy and my sins may then cause in me, and give me due dispositions to re-

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ceive my viaticum with an humble and assured confidence in your goodness and mercy; and in the promise you make me, that if I eat your flesh, and drink your blood, I shall live for ever. Let your goodness in then visiting me give me a fresh assurance of it, and make me leave this world with joy and comfort.

Acts of Faith, Hope, &c. as above.

Second Visit for the same Day, in the Spirit of Gratitude.

Reflect that Christ descends from Heaven to earth expressly for your sake alone, as often as you communicate, foreseeing that in such an host (into which he enters) you will receive him: This he does with a design to sanctify you, and to enrich you with his graces, being in that host only for you, and there he prays and offers himself to his Eternal Father for you; and his heart burns with love for you, and with a desire of inflaming yours.

Dear Saviour, what obligation have I to you! and how can I sufficiently thank you for being thus pleased to think on me, and to work such wonders for my sake?

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ſake? I offer you in return all the thanks that are rendered you by the Bleſſed in Heaven, and by your ſervants on earth. What can I wiſh for more than you have done? Nothing, but that you would pleaſe to bid me come to you, for knowing myſelf unworthy, I dare not otherways approach. And this you alſo do, ſaying, *Come to me all you that are burdened, and I will refreſh and eaſe you.* This being, I will not fear to approach and receive you, ſince I have your orders for it.

Whilſt I may thus approach to you and receive you in this Divine Sacrament, no loſs ſhall afflict me; for in you I have all that is, or can be neceſſary for me. Grant I may, in ſome ſort, merit this effect of your love, by ſuffering and labouring for your glory in this adorable Myſtery. And ſince your food in it is the virtues of our ſouls, and the love and honour we pay you, when we receive you, my chief care ſhall be to prepare my ſoul for that happineſs.

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Acts of Faith, Hope, &c. as above.

Third Visit as above also.

SEC. VIII.

Friday—First Visit.

Go to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament as to your soul's Lover. His love for us is unmeasurable, remaining continually with us, desiring to communicate his benefits, and unite himself entirely to us. A life of thirty-three years spent for our service seems too short to him, and therefore he works the greatest of miracles, to satisfy the greatest of desires. He is pleased to say, his delights are to be with the children of men, and he makes it appear in this adorable Mystery.

My dear Redeemer, is it possible that you should love me, your unworthy creature, to such an excess, as to give yourself wholly to me? Have you then forgot my offences, and the ill treatment you have received from me, when so good as to visit me? You hate sin infinitely, yet you hate it less than you love me. O Divine

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Divine heart of my Saviour, worthy the love of all hearts! I conſecrate mine to you; fill it with your love, that ſo it may be worthy of your acceptance, and let your heart be touched with my miſeries, the greateſt of which is, that I ſo little love what is ſo infinitely amiable. But ſince you deſire to unite yourſelf to me, unworthy as I am, by this heavenly Myſtery, which is a Myſtery of union, effect it to your glory.

Acts of Faith, Hope, &c. as above.

The ſecond Viſit on the ſame Day, in the Spirit of Praiſe.

O my ſovereign Lord, it is impoſſible for me to praiſe you as I ought, for that incomparable love you expreſs for me in this Divine Sacrament, making yourſelf my food and nouriſhment in this life, and my recompence in the next. And for all the graces and favours you have done me, and are continually ready to beſtow upon me; therefore to ſupply for my inability, I offer you, in return, all the praiſes that have been, are, and will be rendered you for all eternity.

Bleſſed

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Bleſſed Angels and happy Saints, I moſt humbly beg you to praiſe, bleſs, and glorify my Sovereign and yours in my behalf. Give him, I beſeech you, the honour I ought to pay to his Divine Majeſty; and I, with my whole heart, join and unite my intention to all the love, adorations, and glory you ſhall ever give him for a whole eternity.

Then remain in ſilence, admiring his Perfections and the Prodigies of his Love expreſt in this Sacrament. For one of his Prophets ſpeaking to him ſays, *Silence, my God, is one of the things that praiſes you moſt loudly.*

Acts of Faith, Hope, &c. as above.

Third Viſit as above alſo.

SEC. IX.

Saturday—Firſt Viſit.

Go to Jeſus in the Bleſſed Sacrament, as to your Maſter, humbly beg him to teach you all that is neceſſary for you to know, or that he would have you to learn.

Great

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Great God, grant this favour to your poor creature, ſpeak to my heart in this viſit, and teach me all you would have me do. For I ſhould make more profit in perfection, if, in place of others, you would ſpeak to me yourſelf; for that is ſoon learnt which you teach. Speak then, dear Lord, and teach me all that belongs to my duty and charge: make me learn to do it well; for you only can give ſenſe and underſtanding to your ſcholars. Make me not only learn, but retain whatever you ſhall teach me, that ſo I may faithfully practiſe it.

And ſince you are pleaſed to remain continually with me, I will, before I go to others, come to you for inſtructions. But if, Divine Maſter, I am not quick at learning, or forget what I have learned, pardon and pity my weakneſs, and have patience with me.

Acts of Faith, &c. as above.

The ſecond Viſit for the ſame Day.

In the Spirit of Poverty and Want.

Chriſt, in the Bleſſed Sacrament, is infinitely rich, wiſe, and powerful. If, as Holy

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Holy Scripture tells us, the Queen of Saba went from the extremities of the earth to ſee the riches, and hear the wiſdom of Solomon; and if he gave her all ſhe *would* and *aſked*, beſides what he, out of his Royal Munificence, preſented her; What may you hope for? make your reflections upon all this, and conſide the like will be your lot. With his riches he will enrich you; with his wiſdom he will enlighten you, ſolve your doubts, and clear your difficulties; and with his ſtrength he will defend and fortify you againſt your enemies.

Say to his Divine Majeſty, Lord, behold here a miſerable Creature, indigent and beggarly, and an object of pity. The leaſt ſign from you will make me happy, and you will loſe nothing by enriching me. Give me plenty then, for my wants are great, and I cannot be ſatisfied with a little; nor is it glorious to your name to give ſparingly. Let your gifts be worthy of the giver. Beſtow upon me your love, your grace, your fear, and a zeal of your glory, and of the Sanctification of my Soul. It will redound more to your glory to enrich me with theſe gifts, thereby to ſave

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ſave me, than to ruin me by the refuſal of them.

Acts of Faith, Hope, Charity, as above.

The third Viſit as above alſo.

Beſides three Viſits each day, you cannot do leſs to comply with the perſevering love of Jeſus in the Bleſſed Sacrament, than to viſit him from time to time as occaſion will permit, though but for a moment, as at one time to adore him, another time to offer him your heart, and the hearts of all the community. Another time to beg his bleſſing for yourſelf and for thoſe under your care. At other times to thank him for remaining continually with you. Then to beg he will make himſelf be as much beloved and honoured, in the adorable Sacrament in this houſe, as he is in any place upon earth.

In theſe ſort of Prayers which we make in our Viſits, and which are properly called aſpirations, St. Francis, of Sales, would have us pronounce them rather with heart than with mouth; and he adds, that thoſe which love ſuggeſts to us

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us upon the ſpot will be the beſt and moſt profitable.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the preſence of God.

SEC. I.

How advantageous it is to keep ourſelves in his preſence.

THE exerciſe of the preſence of God is the principal and moſt important of all other exerciſes of devotion. It is what gives life and motion to the reſt, without which they will neither have force nor vigour.

It is that which makes the Juſt Man, guards the Juſt Man, and feeds the Juſt Man. There are but few that arrive to the perfection of this Holy Practice, becauſe they meet with many difficulties which few have the courage to overcome. This exerciſe is the very root of all our ſpiritual good, by means thereof a ſoul becomes rich in grace and virtue.

It happens ſometimes, that notwithſtanding the deſire we have of keeping ourſelves

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ourſelves in the ſimple view of God's preſence, we find great tedioufneſs and diſguſt in it; but this muſt not hinder us, for our motive in doing it ought to be purely to pleaſe God, and not to ſatisfy ſelf-love, which would always find ſome reliſh or ſupport, as well in exerciſes of Piety as in other things.

Peace is ſo neceſſary in order to this exerciſe, that we muſt always endeavour to keep our ſoul in peace, being ever upon our guard to admit of no diſturbance, whatever happens to us, turning from all that may diſquiet us as from a malignant vapour, and eſtabliſhing ourſelves in a firm and ſolid tranquillity, which makes us capable of all good, and without which we are capable of none.

Inquire Pacem & perſequere eam. Seek Peace and follow it with great care.

In omnibus requiem quæſivi. I have ſought peace in all things, and have endeavoured to poſſeſs an unſhaken one in all events.

Summus ſapientia finis eſt ut ſimus mente tranquilla. The end of wiſdom is to keep our mind always in peace, and conſerve ourſelves in an inviolable tranquillity.

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Hæc eſt Vita conſummati perfectique Sapientis. It is the life of the wiſe and perfect.

As peace is neceſſary in order to our keeping ourſelves in the preſence of God, ſo a lively faith of his preſence and protection is the means to keep a ſoul in peace in the midſt of troubles and pains. But we muſt underſtand that there are two ſorts of peace; the one is accompanied with ſweetneſs, in which caſe it is eaſy to be faithful to God, and practiſe virtue. But the other ſort of peace is full of bitterneſs, interior pains and diſguſts, which afflict a ſoul, notwithſtanding ſhe enjoys peace. This *Peace*, as holy Scripture calls it, is full of bitterneſs, and conſiſts not in taſting the ſweets of peace, but in ſuffering troubles, agitations, and interior pains, with an humble ſubmiſſion to the will of God; and this peace is incomparably more meritorious and ſanctifying than the other. A ſoul agitated and tormented, without comfort from God or man, is ſuſtained only by her Faith in God's preſence, by which ſhe keeps herſelf faithful to him in her duties, and ſubmiſſive to his will; ſeeking purely to content him, without knowing

ſhe

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ſhe does it. She is tormented by temptations, dryneſs, and diſguſts in the exerciſes of Piety, ſo that ſhe becomes a horror to herſelf, as thinking ſhe is ſo to Almighty God, to whom in the meantime ſhe is moſt pleaſing; for by ſuch trials he renders her more worthy of his love.

The preſence of God is an habitual belief that God is preſent, and an elevation of our heart and mind to him by means of aſpirations; the frequent uſe of which will both ſerve to keep us in his preſence, and to bring us back again when we are ſtrayed from it. Theſe aſpirations or ejaculatory Prayers are judged not only beneficial, but neceſſary to keep us from committing ſin. They alſo comfort us in our afflictions; for the greateſt conſolation in this exile is to think of God, who is the ſource of all comfort. They render our actions ſupernatural, our days full of merit, and your lives worthy of God; making us live to God, of God, and continually in God's preſence. And as his Divine Majeſty has his Eyes always fixed on us, ſo the ſoul, by means of aſpirations, turns her's towards him.

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By the frequent uſe of this exerciſe we practiſe diverſe virtues, according to the diverſity of our aſpirations. The fire of God's love is kindled and maintained in our hearts. The ſpirit of devotion is acquired. It prevents ſin from entering, or drives it out again, if entered. It gains the heart of God, and as it were ties him with a hair, that is, an aſſent of our thought.

As for the aſpirations, they may be either what God then inſpires us with, or what we have drawn from our morning meditation, or any that moves us moſt.

The times moſt neceſſary of uſing them are at the beginning, middle, and end of each action, and when the clock ſtrikes.

The interior occupation of a ſoul with God is a ſpecial privilege of his grace, and depends on his mercy. It is not what we can attain to by any induſtry of ours. We muſt aſk it of God by means of Prayer; for all our endeavours, without his help, will avail us nothing. We muſt daily beg of Almighty God that he will pleaſe to grant us the grace frequently to remember his Divine preſence, and

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and that with due diſpoſitions of heart, an interior adoration and tender affection.

Let us alſo beg our good Angels, who never loſe ſight of God, to mind us often of his preſence, and obtain us the grace to increaſe thereby in his Holy Fear and Love.

SEC. II.

A Practice of the Preſence of God, by means of Faith, Hope, and Charity, and Conformity to his Divine Will.

It is of very great importance to be perſuaded that our perfection and happineſs conſiſts in the union of our ſouls, and its faculties, will, memory, and underſtanding, with God, by Faith, Hope, Charity, and Conformity to God's Will.

The moſt noble, profitable, and perfect action we can do in this life, or in the next, is to unite ourſelves to God, and to his Divine Son Jeſus Chriſt; becauſe by this union (according to the Doctrine of the Saints) we become one Spirit with God. Now the moſt efficacious means we have of doing this, is by Faith, Hope, Charity, and Conformity to his Will; and therefore the practice of

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theſe virtues ought to be very familiar with us, and in a manner continual; or perhaps we may reap more advantage by taking one at a time for practice, and ſo change every month, beginning with the firſt in January, by which we ſhall have three ſeparate months in a year for each of the four virtues.

SEC. III.

The Properties and Excellence of Faith.

Faith is the foundation, root, ſource, and meaſure of all other virtues; as much as we have of Faith, ſo much we ſhall have of Hope, of Charity, of Conformity to God's Will.

Faith is the virtue which is moſt pleaſing and glorious to God, becauſe it ſacrifices the moſt noble faculty of our ſouls, to wit, the underſtanding. It is the moſt powerful of all other means to obtain what we deſire, according to our Saviour's own words, *There is nothing impoſſible to them that have Faith.*

It is under the ſtandard of Faith that all the other virtues rank themſelves to fight their enemies. It is in that fortreſs they

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they retire to defend themſelves by a generous reſiſtance againſt all the attacks of the enemy.

It is Faith that makes the juſt man prefer the ſervice of God to any intereſt of his own. Without Faith, Charity cannot ſubſiſt, becauſe Faith ſhews us how amiable God is, which makes us love him.

The bloſſom that precedes the fruit, and the foundation which ſupports the whole Edifice of all the other virtues.

SEC. IV.

The Practice of Faith.

1ſt, We muſt believe with a pure, blind, and naked Faith, all the myſteries of our Holy Religion, and the truths, ſpeculative and practical, revealed by God.

2dly, We muſt believe them incomparably more than all that appears evident in nature.

3dly, And although the world ſhould doubt, yet we ſhould reſolve to live and die in that belief.

Then

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Then we muſt deſcend to ſome particulars. One of the moſt important is, the preſence of God in all places. His providence over us, and care of us. For if we firmly believe that God looks on us, hearkens to us in all times and places, has a continual care and providence over us, continually thinks of us, and in all occaſions is attentive to our wants and neceſſities, and has a more than paternal affection to conduct us to our beatitude, it will breed in us an unſhaken confidence in God, and a tender filial love for him, and a high eſteem of his conduct, tho' never ſo contrary to the ſentiments of nature.

In omni loco oculi Domini contemplantur bonos & malos. The eyes of our Lord in all places contemplate the good and the bad.

Servavi mandata tua, & teſtimonia tua, quia omnes viæ meæ in ſonſpectu tuo. I kept your will becauſe I reflected that I was in your preſence, and that all my works were expoſed to your eyes.

Naked Faith is ſomething painful to beginners, becauſe the interior part and ſenſes have no ſhare therein, but ſeek to render ſenſible that which is ſpiritual, and to

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to reduce to experience that which belongs only to Faith. This is the weakneſs of our nature, which would fain feel things ſenſible. We muſt have patience with it; but not yield to it, but remain firm in the ſuperior part of our ſouls by naked faith; firmly believing that God is preſent, though we have not any experience of it in ourſelves; not ſo much as a good thought, nor any good ſentiment, nor conſolation, having in this no ſupport but in Faith, by which we keep ourſelves united to God preſent.

Thus raiſing ourſelves above nature in the ſimple union of the Divine Preſence, without ſeeing, reliſhing, or receiving any agreeable effects of it; content to believe God preſent, without ſeeking any other aſſurance, neither more light nor more conſolation than he thinks fit; nor that he ſhould manifeſt himſelf any other way than as he pleaſes.

The beſt means of keeping ourſelves thus united to God, is that of aſpirations, which we ought, at leaſt, to make every half hour, or at fartheſt every hour. And though they are performed in a moment, their fruit is everlaſting.

If

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If we have not drawn any from our morning's Meditation, nor are not inſpired by Almighty God with any particular one, we may make uſe of ſome one of the enſuing aſpirations; and at the beginning and end of all our actions, adoring the Bleſſed Trinity preſent, refer it to the glory of the Divine Majeſty, by the *Gloria Patri*, &c.

Upon both which we muſt make our particular examination, and be exact in marking down how often we have failed in the morning, and how often in the afternoon; for that will be a means to make us more faithful.

It muſt alſo be the virtue or fruit we draw from our Meditations; and we muſt heartily beg it of Almighty God in all our Prayers and Communions, the month that we pretend to make it our practice; being ſenſible that all endeavours will never obtain it unleſs he is pleaſed to give it to us.

Laſtly, We muſt, once a Week, as long as we aim at making it our practice, read it over, and reflect for a quarter of an hour upon all that is here ſet down for that effect.

Some

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Some proper Aſpirations for this Intent.

My God, you always behold me, grant I may never ceaſe to love you.

O my God, you are here preſent, grant me the grace never to offend you.

God of my heart, make me what you would have me.

Great God, draw my heart entirely to you.

God of goodneſs, have mercy on me. My God, ſave your poor creature; let not my ſoul be loſt which has coſt you ſo dear.

Lord, make me perfectly love you, and always obey you.

My God, your goodneſs is infinite, and the love with which you love me is from eternity! You are my portion and my inheritance. I deſire nothing beſides you.

SEC. IV.

The way of keeping ourſelves united to God, by the virtue of Hope.

This virtue makes us hope in God, and of God the poſſeſſion of all good, and

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and a deliverance from all evils, both thoſe of this life and of the next; this hope is founded on his goodneſs, the fidelity of his promiſes, and the merits of Chriſt. As this virtue has regard to God alone, from whom we expect ſuccours and remedy to all our neceſſities, it is pure and naked, and ſhutting our eyes to all that weakens it, whether from ourſelves or from creatures, it may be called blind.

The Properties and Excellence of Hope.

Firſt, It is very pleaſing to Almighty God, and does truly honour him; becauſe it purely proceeds from the great eſteem we have of his goodneſs.

It procures immenſe treaſures; for it obtains of God all that it aſks, and gives courage to overcome difficulties, becauſe it leans upon the power of God, and confers on our ſouls an eminent perfection.

It creates in us a great confidence in the Divine Majeſty, whom we believe preſent, which thought raiſes our dejected Spirits, and inſpires joy. It is all the conſolation we have in our exile.

What

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What ſhould we do in this World, if we did not think of the God of comfort and Father of mercies? as ſuch he is moved with our miſeries. He knows the ſtate we are in, and what troubles us; and can and will help us, if, conſidering him preſent, we make recourſe to him with confidence. My God, ſays our Holy Father, *You love me too much to abandon me. It is ſufficient that you know my neceſſities, to convince me that you will do whatever is beſt for your Glory and my good.*

Non timebo mala quoniam tu mecum es: I will not fear the evils which ſurround me, becauſe you are with me to ſuſtain and deliver me.

Quoniam in me ſperavit liberabo eum; protegam eum quoniam cognovit Nomen meum. I will deliver him and protect him, becauſe he knows my Name; that is to ſay, becauſe he looks on me, and honours me as his Father. He ſhall have recourſe to me, and I will hear him. I will be with him in his tribulations, and deliver him.

You men of little Faith, ſaid our Lord, Why do you doubt, ſince I am with you. This he ſaid to his Apoſtles, and the

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ſame he ſays to each of us, being preſent *every* where. Fear nothing but to confide in my goodneſs, for nothing can hurt you as long as you confide in me. What a comfortable aſſurance!

The Practice of Hope.

1ſt, We muſt firmly hope that God will give us all that he has promiſed us. And this we muſt hope with a pure, naked, and blind Hope.

2dly, We muſt hope it with an unſhaken firmneſs, incomparably more than we hope for any thing from any creature, whatever affection they may have for us.

3dly, Though all mankind ſhould doubt, yet with God's grace we would live and die in that perſuaſion and hope.

Then we muſt deſcend to ſome particulars, as that God will have care of our Life and Death, and will aſſiſt us in our Temptations, Afflictions, and Maladies; and that he will diſpoſe of us, and of all that relates to us, as he ſees beſt for his glory and our good.

Proper

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Proper Aſpirations for this Intent.

Tu es, Domine, ſpes mea. You are, O Lord, my only Hope.

In Verbum tuum ſuperſperavi. In your word I have hoped above all.

Etiam ſi occiderit me, in ipſo ſperabo, & ipſe erit Salvator meus. Although you ſhould afflict me with all evils, and ſhould kill me, yet I will not ceaſe to hope in you, my God and Saviour.

Non timebo mala quoniam tu mecum es. I will fear no evil, becauſe you, Lord, are with me.

Dominus regit me & nihil mihi deerit; our Lord governs me and has care of me, and nothing ſhall be wanting to me.

And with St. Francis, when he floated upon a plank in the ſea,

What have I to fear, God ſees me, and can help me? I will whatever he pleaſes.

The better to keep ourſelves united to God preſent, by means of hope, we may uſe ſome of theſe aſpirations, or the like, every half hour, or at leaſt every hour; and at the beginning of each action, being ſenſible that we ſtand in need of God's Aſſiſtance and Help. Let us beg it with

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confidence by thoſe words, *Deus in adjutorium*, &c. on both which we muſt make our particular examen as above.

We muſt alſo make that virtue our chief aim in our Meditations, and the fruit we draw from them, during the time we take it for practice; begging it of Almighty God, in all our Prayers and Communions, as being ſenſible that all our labours and endeavours will avail us nothing, unleſs God is pleaſed to beſtow it on us.

Laſtly, We muſt, once a week, as long as we aim at the practice of this virtue, take a quarter of an hour to read over and reflect upon what is here ſet down for that effect.

SEC. VI.

How to keep ourſelves united to Almighty God, by the Means of Charity.

It is the virtue which makes us love God and ourſelves, and all things elſe for him, without mixture of our own intereſt, or that of any creature, by which our Charity is pure, naked, and blind, ſhutting our eyes to all things but God.

We

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We have certainly an infinity of motives to love God; but laying them aſide, the tender name of Father ought to ſuffice, it being a name of pure love, which expreſſes the love he bears us, and alſo marks the love we owe and ought to pay him.

The Properties and Excellence of Charity.

Charity is the virtue which gives worth to all we do. It is not counſel, but a command made by God. It is the firſt, the greateſt, and the moſt ſweet of all his commands, as well as the moſt neceſſary. If we love him not, having ſo many obligations to do it, we are the baſeſt of his creatures, and unworthy of ſuch a command.

Charity, without diſpute, is the greateſt of all virtues. It is the very ſoul and life of them, and renders them worthy of eternal beatitude. It is the accompliſhment of God's law. It procures moſt honour to his Divine Majeſty, and moſt merit to ourſelves. It gives force to do and ſuffer great things for his ſervice.

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The Practice of Charity.

1ſt, To love God, ourſelves, and all things elſe for him, with a pure, naked, and blind Charity.

2dly, To reſolve to live and die in his love, though thereby we ſhould incur all evils.

3dly, To perform all we do for the love of God, which is to walk with large ſteps to Perfection and true Sanctity.

4thly, To obey the Divine Majeſty in all things, eſpecially in loving our neighbour, becauſe he will have it ſo; and doing them all the good we can, becauſe he will take to himſelf whatever we do to them.

Aſpirations proper for this Intent.

O God, of love, reign in my heart, and poſſeſs it alone.

My God I love you above all things; but if I love you not enough, grant I may love you more.

Give me that love you command, and then command what you pleaſe.

Come,

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Come, Lord, and reign in the midſt of your enemies, and deſtroy all that oppoſes your love in me.

Great God, you fill Heaven and earth; let not my heart be void and empty of your love.

Dear Lord, grant me a holy hatred of myſelf, and a perfect love of you.

You are my God, and that contents me. My God and my all.

Theſe aſpirations will ſerve both to enkindle the love of God in our hearts, and to maintain and keep it alive. We muſt, therefore, frequently uſe them, as every half hour, or at leaſt every hour; and at the beginning of each action, conſidering God's benefits to us in that action, (the more to inflame our hearts with love) thanking him for the ſame with theſe words, *Deo gratias*, performing it for love of him, ſaying, *propter te*.

Upon both theſe ſpecified times for aſpirations, we muſt make our particular examen, and not forget a weekly reflection, as mentioned after the other two virtues, Faith and Hope.

SEC.

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SEC. VII.

Of Conformity to God's Will, and the Manner of keeping ourſelves united to God preſent, by Means of the ſame.

The Will of God muſt, of neceſſity, tend to his Glory, and our Salvation and Sanctification. We muſt then conclude that the moſt natural and efficacious means to glorify God and to ſanctify ourſelves, is to accompliſh his Will. We have nothing properly our own but our will. When we ſtrip ourſelves of it, we then poſſeſs nothing, by which we are put in a capacity of being filled with God.

The Will of God is ſignified to us by the orders of his Providence. For it is an Article of Faith that God knows all and diſpoſes of all; and that nothing happens but by the orders of his Providence, and by the diſpoſition of his Will. We muſt then ſubmit ourſelves to them, both as to what concerns ourſelves and others, and to all the accidents of this life. And believe it the duty of our will in point of obedience to God's Will, as it

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it is of our underſtanding in Point of Faith, to renounce all human reaſon.

The Properties and Excellence of Conformity to God's Will.

Conformity to the Divine Will is the nobleſt of all other employments, having for object the higheſt End, which is the Will of God. It is the ſhorteſt way to perfection, and the moſt efficacious means to ſolid peace of mind.

It is what in ſome manner we are obliged to, ſince it is impoſſible that God ſhould not deſire, and even exact that his Will and good Pleaſure ſhould be the univerſal rule of all the actions of his creatures. It is the moſt profitable manner of the Preſence of God; by it we walk with God, and are conducted by him as ſheep by their Paſtor, even to the mount of Perfection.

By it we become Victims of God. The perpetual reſignation of ourſelves into the hands of God, in all events ſubmitting to his will, and accepting all the effects of his providence, is one of the moſt eſſential and moſt advantageous practices of a ſpiritual life, producing in them

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them that uſe it, peace, purity of heart, and Divine love, more than all other practices.

By it we exerciſe not an ordinary charity towards God, but an effective love. We may lawfully reſt content with this practice, which will ſupply the place of Man's Devotions.

Vita in Voluntate ejus. Life and all ſorts of good are found in the accompliſhment of God's Will.

The Practice.

Firſt, To beg Almighty God to eſtabliſh in our ſouls a perfect ſubmiſſion to all his wills.

2dly, To make acts of conformity to his bleſſed will, in all that relates to us, both in body and ſoul, goods, honours, pleaſures, time, and eternity; and alſo in all that God permits to happen amongſt creatures in heaven, earth, and hell; in nature, grace, and glory; deſiring that all ſhould be as God would have it.

3dly, When we find pain and difficulty to obey God, and feel motions of revolt againſt his deſigns and diſpoſitions over us, to ſay with David, *My ſoul, will you*

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you not ſubmit to God? Will you be rebellious to him from whom you have received all you have, and are?

Obmetui & non aperui es meum quoniam tu feciſti. I held my peace that I might not ſay a word againſt what happened, becauſe it was you that permitted it.

Aſpirations proper to keep us united to God's Will.

Lord, I accept with ſubmiſſion of all you ordain, both in regard of myſelf and others.

You are my Lord and Maſter, do what you pleaſe with me.

Ordain whatever you pleaſe, but give me grace to do whatever you ordain.

Make me according to your deſire, always fulfilling your will.

Make me obey you perfectly.

Teach me to do your Will, becauſe you are my God.

Come and reign in the midſt of your enemies, and deſtroy all that oppoſes your Will.

Force my rebellious will to do yours for ever.

Theſe,

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Theſe, or the like aſpirations, if made every half hour, or at leaſt every hour, will keep us united to God by conformity of our will to his. At the beginning of each Action, adoring God preſent and his Will, which calls us to that Action; let us ſay, my God, I do this to obey your Will; and I unite it to that obedience which my dear Saviour rendered to your Will; upon both theſe we muſt make our particular examen.

We muſt alſo make this virtue our chief aim in our Meditations, and the fruit we draw from them during the time we take it for practice: And beg it of Almighty God, in all our Prayers and Communions, being ſenſible that all our endeavours will avail us nothing in order to the attaining it, unleſs God gives it.

Every week we ſhould obſerve theſe following things: 1ſt, For one quarter of an hour to read over and conſider how we comport ourſelves in the aforeſaid practices of the preſence of God; whether as ſet down for that effect; for conſtancy makes perfectneſs.

2dly, If thoſe virtues produce the ſentiments and effects proper, according to what

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what is ſet down; for by the fruit we we muſt judge of the tree.

We ſhould alſo, from time to time, examine whether we make uſe of the methods for hearing Holy Maſs; if we read the motives before them, in order to raiſe in ourſelves a high eſteem and greater attention, by which we ſhall reap a far greater benefit from it. Then as to the Divine Office, mental Prayer, viſits to the Bleſſed Sacrament, and beads; let us reflect how we perform them, whether according to the methods here propoſed, or any other.

We ſhould do well to write down the faults we find we have been guilty of, which will be a good means towards amendment.

An Oblation, or Profeſſion of an entire Submiſſion to God's Will, to be made from Time to Time.

My Lord and my God, I acknowledge the ſubmiſſion I owe to your Divine Will, which I cannot violate without offence. And that it is your will which governs and diſpoſes of all things, either by an abſolute ordinance, or a permiſſive

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one, that a leaf cannot ſtir, nor a bird fly, nor a hair fall from our heads, without your permiſſion. I acknowledge alſo that you created me purely to do your will. O pardon my having gone contrary to it, and give me grace to amend for the future, and to ſubmit entirely to your will, in the manner that is moſt pleaſing to your Divine Majeſty.

I beſeech you, dear Lord, through the merits of that perfect ſubmiſſion which my Saviour paid to all your wills, grant me the grace to have no will but yours, to which I abandon myſelf for life and death, time and eternity, and that I may rather chuſe to die than deliberately deſire any thing contrary to it. Grant I may, by conformity to your will, ſtifle in myſelf all contrary motions, that ſo your Divine Will may be victorious over mine.

It belongs to you, my God, to govern the world, and to bring each one to their end by the means you judge fit. We can chuſe nothing better than what your wiſdom ordains. It is our duty to let ourſelves be conducted by you without diving into your councils, but humbly in all things ſubmitting to your will,

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which I beg I may ever perform to your glory. *Amen.*

CHAPTER V.

SEC. I.

Motives of loving and honouring our Bleſſed Lady, and to raiſe a high Eſteem for the Devotion of the Beads, which, of all others, is moſt acceptable to her.

FIRST, Our Lady is the Mother of God, and that alone ought to be a ſufficient motive to render her all honour that may be given to a creature. She has none above her but God himſelf, and all that is not God is below her.

2dly, She is our Mother, given us by her Bleſſed Son, who gave us all to her on the croſs, in the perſon of Saint John, and gave her to us all; ſo that we are equally with him her children, and ſhe our Mother, and his will is that we both love and honour her, and make recourſe to her as to a Mother.

3dly, Her love and charity for us, and deſire of our good, infinitely ſurpaſſes that of all the Saints, as does her power

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to help us, being Mother to the Almighty.

4thly, No day of our lives ſhould paſs in which we do not render her the honour and duty we owe her, as to our moſt dear Mother, and Mother of our Redeemer. God comes to us by her, and by her interceſſion we may go to him. The moſt powerful helps of human miſery are to be had by having recourſe and devotion to our Lady.

Of all the Prayers in her honour we ought moſt to eſteem the *Ave Maria*, which the oftner we ſay with devotion, the better. No Prayer ought to take place of it in our eſteem, but the *Pater noſter*, which is taught us by Chriſt himſelf, and therefore called his Prayer. It contains whatever he would have us aſk, both for his glory and our good, and that in a few pathetic words. Which being, we cannot do better than to keep our mind and hearts occupied with the ſenſe of the words, as we pronounce them, except prevented by ſome affection, as likely we may be, even with the firſt two words, *Pater noſter*; when we reflect who it is we call Father, and that he aſſures us his love for us ſurpaſſes that of a Mother

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ther to her Child, which, though ſhe ſhould forget, yet he would not forget us.

If this comfortable truth ſhould take up our mind, we may reſt there and go no further; for as long as we find ourſelves ſo taken up, Saint Thereſia ſays, it were to loſe a great favour by our fault to do otherways, and that we do much more by ſaying ſome words after this manner, than by repeating the whole *Pater noſter* ſeveral times without attention, or ſcarce knowing what we ſay.

The ſame Saint ſays, that ſome, to diſpatch the taſk of Prayers they have ſet themſelves, chuſe rather to hurry them over, than to follow God's attract. In the Name of God, ſays the Saint, do not ſo, for you put an obſtacle to the grace his Divine Majeſty offers you, which is of great importance.

Let us ſay what we pleaſe of our beads, yet we muſt be convinced that all depends on being attentive to the words we ſpeak, and united to the two objects of our Devotion, which are God and his Bleſſed Mother; otherways we ſhew that we have but little reſpect, when we chuſe rather to be faithful to the number of our

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Prayers, (becauſe we have a ſcruple to omit them) than to the well performance of them. For we do worſe to ſay them ſo, than not to ſay them at all, except they were Prayers of Obligation, as the Divine Office, &c. And but hurrying over our others is not only a miſpending our time, but alſo a ſingular diſreſpect to Almighty God.

After the *Pater noſter*, no prayer ought to take place of the *Ave Maria*, which was compoſed, as you know, by the Angel, who had his orders from God, by Saint Elizabeth, inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt, and by our Holy Mother the Church, moved by the ſame Spirit, to petition that powerful Lady in favour of her children; and therefore all that are ſo, ought to ſay it with great Devotion and attention.

In order to the better performance of this, we may make uſe of ſome one of theſe following methods, as ſhall be ſuitable with our preſent diſpoſition. If we find difficulty in ſo many reflections for one *Ave Maria*, we may uſe but one at a time, and continue therein, not only during the whole *Ave Maria*, but the ten, and longer if we find our minds taken

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ken up with it; and it will be more profitable than to change.

SEC. II.

A Method on the Words of the Angelical Salutation.

1. *Hail Mary,* Lady of this World, Queen of Heaven, whom all nations honour and worſhip.

2. *Hail Sea of Grief* in the Paſſion of your Son; for your grief was equal to your love, ſufficient to have deprived you of life.

3. *Hail Mother of my Saviour,* in whom are all my Hopes.

1. *Full of Grace,* even from your Conception, then ſanctified by the Holy Ghoſt, and built into a Temple fit to lodge the King of Angels.

2. *Full of Sanctifying Grace,* which in a far leſs meaſure makes other Saints.

3. *Full of Grace,* and to that fullneſs was added the fountain of all Grace, Chriſt our Saviour.

1. *Our Lord is with you,* not only as with his Saints and Servants, but in a more

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more excellent and high degree, being with you as your Son.

2. *Our Lord is with you,* in your underſtanding to enlighten it, and in your Will to inflame it above all others.

3. *Our Lord is with you* now in Heaven, and you with him in ſuch a plenitude of Glory, that no creature elſe does, or ever ſhall enjoy the like.

1. *Bleſſed amongſt Women,* interiorly in yourſelf, as being a Celeſtial Cabinet, in which is contained all the Bleſſings that you may obtain for us.

2. *Bleſſed amongſt all on Earth,* as infinitely ſurpaſſing them all in greatneſs.

3. *Bleſſed amongſt all* in Heaven, becauſe ſeated above all, and nearer to God.

1. *Bleſſed is the Fruit of your Womb,* in himſelf eſſentially bleſſed from all eternity.

2. *Bleſſed is the Fruit of your Womb,* and ſo overflowing with the fullneſs of Bleſſings, that he made you bleſſed bearing him.

3. *Bleſſed is the Fruit of your Womb,* he being the Redeemer of ſinners on the croſs, and the Food of the Elect in the Bleſſed Sacrament.

2. *Jeſus.*

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2. *Jeſus.* A Name of joy to Saints and Angels; a name of comfort and reverence to men; and a name of terror to the devils.

2. *Jeſus.* A Name which illuminates when preached, feeds when thought on, and ſuccours when invocated.

3. *Jeſus.* A Name which confirms our joys, gives comfort in our grief, and hope in our deſpair.

1. *Holy Mary.* Who have the largeſt ſhare of Holineſs and Sanctity, as being not only free from ſin, but alſo from all frailty in thought, word, or deed. All in you was virtuous, perfect, and holy.

2. *Holy Mary.* Holy above all the Saints the Church has produced, as reverencing the Divine Majeſty with a more filial fear, loving him with a more inflamed charity, and ſoliciting his mercies for us with a more unwearied piety.

3. *Holy Mary.* As being the living Altar, conſecrated to God, as being daughter to the eternal Father by adoption, Mother of the Son, Spouſe of the Holy Ghoſt, and Sacred Temple of the Bleſſed Trinity.

1. *Mother of God,* and conſequently the greateſt of all creatures, and moſt Holy of

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of all Mothers, becauſe you conceived, by the Holy Ghoſt, the ſource of Holineſs.

2. *Mother of God.* Who is all goodneſs, all wiſdom, and all mercy.

3. *Mother of God.* And therefore the moſt glorious of Mothers, being Mother to him, who is Lord of Angels and King of glory.

1. *Pray for us Sinners,* to the Eternal Father, (whom we have much offended) that he will pleaſe to pardon our ſins, and write us in the book of life.

2. *Pray for us Sinners,* to Jeſus your Son, and our Saviour, that he will apply to us the merits of his life and death, and pardon us our offences.

3. *Pray for us ſinners,* to God the Holy Ghoſt, that he will repleniſh our ſouls with his ſanctifying grace.

1. *Now,* Whilſt we are yet upon our way to Eternity, encountering difficulties and temptations, and fighting our enemies.

2. *Now,* Whilſt we live, and conſequently offend or merit; the paſt being out of our power, and the future not in it, therefore it is for the preſent we crave your help.

3. *Now,*

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3. *Now*, This very moment, in this action, we beg your Prayers and aſſiſtance, which we ſtand in great need of, ſince obliged to fight againſt ourſelves.

1. *And at the hour of our death*, at that dreadful hour which opens the paſſage to Eternity. When whole armies of our ſins will appear before us in their horrid ſhapes, and our good works in a far ſmaller number, as we have reaſon to fear, ſtand unregarded by.

2. *At the hour of our death*, when we ſhall find nothing to hold us up, from ſinking into deſpair, but the mercies of God, and merits of our Saviour, to whom we beg your interceſſion.

3. *At the hour of our death*, when men will forſake us, and the Angels and Saints expect to ſee our paſſage and hear our doom. O Mother of mercy, at that hour open the bowels of your mercy to receive my laſt and deepeſt groans, that by your interceſſion making a happy end, I may praiſe and glorify the mercies of God, and thank your goodneſs for all Eternity.

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SEC. III.

A ſhort Method on the Angelical Salutation.

1. At *Ave Maria*, to humble ourſelves interiorly before her, whom God vouchſafed to honour above all others, by chuſing her for his Mother, which renders her worthy of the greateſt honour that men or Angels can render her.

2. *Gratia plena*, full of Grace, full even from her conception, fuller than all others. Happy plenitude, there being no vacancy for ſin.

3. *Dominus Tecum*, *benedicta tu in Mulieribus*, &c. Our Lord is with her after a far different and more excellent manner, than with the reſt of his ſervants, which cauſes admiration to the Angels; for he is with her not only as her God and Creator, but alſo as her Son and the fruit of her womb, which renders her the moſt bleſſed of all women.

4. *Sancta Maria*. Moſt Holy indeed, ſince in her dwelt the Holy of Holies.

5. *Ora pro nobis peccatoribus nunc*. Pray for all ſinners, and particularly for me. *Now* at this very time, wherein I live, and

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and conſequently wherein I may offend; and all the remaining moments of my life, even till I arrive to eternity.

6. *Et in hora Mortis noſtræ,* and at the hour of my death, which opens my paſſage to Eternity, I particularly beg your help and aſſiſtance then, and that you will ſhew yourſelf a Mother to me, ſo that if I am unprovided of human aſſiſtance, and ſuddenly called away, I may be helped by you, in whom next to the mercies of God, and merits of your Son, I put my total truſt and Confidence. *Amen.*

At the end of every ten we muſt add the *Gloria Patri,* thanking the moſt bleſſed Trinity for all privileges and graces beſtowed on our Lady; and at the end of our beads ſay a *Salve Regina* for a happy Death, and to beg her powerful aſſiſtance at that hour, leſt we ſhould then be incapable of doing it.

SEC. IV.

Another Manner of reciting our Beads.

In ſaying the three firſt Aves, we muſt honour our Lady as adopted Daughter of

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God the Father, Mother of God the Son, and Spouſe of God the Holy Ghoſt.

The firſt ten is to be employed in acts of Faith—The ſecond in acts of Hope—The third in acts of Love—The fourth in acts of Thankſgiving—The fifth in Petitions—And the ſixth in Recommendations of ourſelves. Theſe acts may be applied to our Lady after this manner.

1ſt. Ten, acts of Faith that ſhe is the moſt excellent, moſt holy, moſt powerful, moſt merciful, moſt wiſe, moſt perfect of all Creatures; and the worthy Queen of Angels and men, heaven and earth.

2d. Ten, of Hope as Mother of God, and moſt rich, merciful, and powerful, we hope ſhe will obtain us the grace to live and die well, and never offend God mortally, to overcome our paſſions and all temptations, to fulfil our duties, and to arrive to the perfection God requires of us; all which we hope for through her interceſſion.

3d. Ten, of *Love*, expreſt by her rejoicing that ſhe is the Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and earth, and the moſt accompliſhed and perfecteſt of all

God's

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God's works, praiſing and thanking God for it.

4th. Ten, of Thankſgiving for all benefits received from her, by her interceſſion, general and particular; and for her conſenting to our dear Saviour's Death for our Salvation.

5th. Ten, of Petition for what we ſtand in need of, both for the corporal and ſpiritual; and not only for ourſelves, but alſo for thoſe we are obliged to pray for by duty, promiſe, or gratitude.

6th. Ten, to recommend ourſelves to her Protection; begging her to ſhew herſelf a Mother to us, eſpecially in obtaining for us whatever may render us more grateful and pleaſing to God, as an ardent love of him, and great zeal to procure his honour and glory.

SEC. V.

A Method for ſaying the Roſary.

Offer the firſt five Tens in honour of the joyful Myſteries for thoſe that are in mortal ſin, or in any neceſſity, either ſpiritual or corporal.

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In the firſt Ten addreſs yourſelf to our Bleſſed Lady, as ſhe is Daughter to the Eternal Father. Reflect on her ſingular Privileges. Congratulate with her for all the Prerogatives of joy and bliſs ſhe enjoys under that title. Give thanks for all favours received by her means.

At the end of each Ten add a *Gloria Patri* and the aſpiration aſſigned.

Aſpiration.

O Sacred Virgin, moſt dearly beloved Daughter of the Eternal Father, employ your credit and powerful interceſſion for all your Servants and Aſſociates, who are unhappily fallen by ſin from the right of Filiation, and are become children of Satan. Obtain them the grace of repentance, I beſeech you. *Amen.*

Second Ten.

Conſider our Bleſſed Lady as ſhe is Mother of the Eternal Word. Make the ſame reflections as before.

Aſpiration.

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Aſpiration.

Monſtra te eſſe Matrem, ſhew yourſelf a Mother, eſpecially to poor ſinners. Obtain them mercy of your Bleſſed Son, and reſtoration of grace, by the merits of Chriſt's bleeding Wounds I beg it. *Amen.*

Third Ten.

Conſider her as ſhe is the Spouſe of the Holy Ghoſt. Make the ſame reflections as before.

Aſpiration.

Sacred Spouſe of the Holy Ghoſt, obtain comfort for your deſolate Servants and aſſociates in their diſtreſſes, grace to riſe from their tepid languors, and the love of God to inflame their hearts, O Mother of Divine love. *Amen.*

Fourth Ten.

Conſider her as the Temple of the Bleſſed Trinity. Make the ſame reflections as before.

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Aſpiration.

O Sacred Temple of the living God! reſtore by your Interceſſion this title to your ſervants, who by ſin have loſt it. Obtain ſtrength for them that are tempted to forfeit it; and never permit them to become ſlaves of the devil by tranſgreſſing the laws of God. *Amen.*

Fifth Ten.

Conſider her as Queen of Angels and men. Reflections as before.

Aſpirations.

O Sacred Queen, caſt a favourable eye upon your poor ſubjects here on earth, eſpecially thoſe who have devoted themſelves to your ſervice in this Aſſociation of the Roſary; but above all, have compaſſion on all ſuch as are in mortal ſin, or in any affliction, corporal or ſpiritual. *Amen.*

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The Second Five Tens in honour of the ſorrowful Myſteries, for all the Aſſociates that are agonizing.

Conſider five of the chief virtues moſt reſplendent in our Lady's life, making Acts of Love, Complacence, and Admiration.

Firſt Ten.

Reflect on her ardent Love, and raiſe in yourſelf the aforeſaid Affections.

Aſpiration.

O Mother of beautiful love, if ever you obtained any ſparks of that Divine Fire for any of your ſuppliants, we now humbly beg that favour for all your Aſſociates now agonizing, that they may happily die in love, to live eternally. *Amen.*

Second Ten.

Conſider her profound humility as before.

Aſpiration.

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Aſpiration.

O Sacred Virgin, Mother and Miſtreſs of the Humble, ſuccour now your children agonizing, and ending the courſe of this mortal Pilgrimage. Obtain them a profound Humility, that they may attain to Eternal Life. *Amen.*

Third Ten.

Conſider her Virginal Purity of body and ſoul. Affections as before.

Aſpiration.

O Virgin of Virgins, have compaſſion on the ſouls of your agonizing Servants, who are terrified with the apprehenſions of paſt ſins and offences, wherewith they have unhappily defiled the purity of their ſouls. Obtain them true Contrition and Eternal Life. *Amen.*

Fourth Ten.

Conſider her firm Hope and Confidence in God. Affections as before.

Aſpiration.

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Aſpiration.

O Mother of the Deſolate, obtain a firm Hope and Confidence in the mercies of God for all the Agonizing of this Confraternity. Take from them all diffidence, and obtain their Eternal Salvation. *Amen.*

Fifth Ten.

Conſider her heroic patience. Affections as before.

Aſpiration.

O Mother of the Miſerable, beg comfort for your afflicted agonizing ſervants! obtain them true patience in their ſufferings, and a happy paſſage to eternal joy. *Amen.*

The Third Five Tens, in honour of the Glorious Myſteries, and for all the Aſſociates detained in Purgatory.

Give thanks to our Bleſſed Lady for all Benefits received from her, by her interceſſion.

Firſt

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Firſt Ten.

Look on her as your Mother, and give thanks for all her tender love, and Motherly care of you and the reſt of the Aſſociates.

Aſpiration.

Deareſt Mother, ſhew yourſelf the Mother of mercy to the ſouls of your Aſſociates ſuffering in Purgatory. Look on them as your children. Let your mercies be to them a heavenly dew to mitigate their flames. *Amen.*

Second Ten.

Look on the Bleſſed Virgin as your Lady and Miſtreſs. Give thanks for all favours received from her under that title. Look on yourſelf as her ſervant and handmaid.

Aſpiration.

O deareſt Lady, employ your credit with your Son, for your ſuffering ſervants in Purgatory. Cover and hide their faults under the mantle of your charity. *Amen.*

Third

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Third Ten.

Look on the Bleſſed Virgin as your Protectreſs, and give thanks for all favours of that nature.

Aſpiration.

O Sacred Virgin, our refuge, caſt a favourable eye on your afflicted clients in Purgatory. Appeaſe the Divine Juſtice in their behalf. Preſent theſe our ſmall devotions offered for them, and pray they may be effectual for their ſuccour. *Amen.*

Fourth Ten.

Look on the Bleſſed Virgin as your Advocate; give thanks for all favours obtained in that kind.

Aſpiration.

O Sacred Virgin, prove now a powerful Advocate for the poor ſouls of this Confraternity ſuffering in Purgatory. Obtain their ſpeedy deliverance. *Amen.*

Fifth

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Fifth Ten.

Look on the Bleſſed Virgin as a dear and confident friend. Give thanks for all favours in that kind.

Aſpiration.

O Sacred Virgin, offer theſe Prayers to your Bleſſed Son, for your friends and ſervants ſuffering in Purgatory. Pray they may be effectual for ſome of their deliverance. *Amen.*

CHAP. VI.

SEC. I.

A Practice of Devotion to our Angel Guardian.

TAKE one day of each month to honour your good Angel. As for example: The ſecond Sunday in the month confeſs and communicate in his honour; and after having employed one quarter after Communion in thankſgiving for the ſaid favour, reflect upon the great goodneſs

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goodneſs of that God you poſſeſs within you, who, knowing your weakneſs, and the danger you are expoſed to both for ſoul and body, and the difficulty you have to defend yourſelf againſt your enemies, has appointed you one of his Angels, who are the Princes of his heavenly court, and has given him orders to aſſiſt and defend you, and never to leave you as long as your ſoul is in your body.

Return his Divine Majeſty moſt humble thanks for ſo infinite a favour, and admire the value he puts on your ſoul, and the love he has for it, ſince he thus employs an Angel for your ſervice. Then with great reſpect and humility addreſs yourſelf to your Angel Guardian and Keeper, thank him for accepting the charge of you, and ſince, on his part, he promiſes you four things, and faithfully performs them: Do you the like, and be as faithful in your performance as he is.

Firſt, he promiſes you to be ever preſent, and never to abandon you.

2dly, To cheriſh and love you as a child of God, bought with his Blood, and deſigned for the ſame glory he enjoys.

3dly, To guard both your body and your ſoul, and to procure what is beſt for both.

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4thly, To continue his care of you in all times and places, till your ſoul is ſeparated from your body.

On your part, promiſe him alſo four things, and beg his aſſiſtance for the performance.

Firſt, A great reverence and reſpect to him, and neither to think, ſay, or do any thing deliberately that may offend or diſpleaſe him.

2dly, A great love and tender devotion to him, loving him as your Father and beſt of friends, and endeavouring to increaſe his glory and joy in heaven, by the Holineſs of your life upon earth.

3dly, A great confidence in his care and protection over you, and to have recourſe to him as a child to the arms of its Mother in all your pains and difficulties, invocating his help in all.

4thly, To perſevere in theſe duties till your laſt breath.

This Contract being made between your good Angel and you, beg our dear Lord, whom you have received, to beſtow his Benediction upon it. Then retire in company of your good Angel, and from time to time entertain yourſelf with him the reſt of the day. Sometimes thanking

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thanking him for all the good turns he has done you from the day of your birth (which was the day he firſt began to take care of you) till this preſent moment, reflecting on the chief, and, next to God, attributing them to him.

Sometimes aſking his pardon for having paſſed ſo many years of your life without thinking of him, or at leaſt very little. And for having ſo often contriſtated him by your imperfections, and ſo ſeldom made your recourſe to him in your neceſſities, or thanked him for his benefits.

At other times open your heart to him, declare to him your neceſſities, and beg him to ſolicit God in your behalf. Deſire him to give you light in your doubts, help in your dangers, comfort in your afflictions, and Victory over your Enemies, with his particular aſſiſtance at the hour of your death.

Moreover, during the day, addreſs yourſelf to him by ſhort aſpirations, and if time will permit you, perform ſome Devotion in his honour, as his Office, or Litanies, or ſome Colloquies, &c.

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CHAPTER VII.

Of Confession.

SEC. I.

Of Spiritual Confeſſion.

AS there are two ſorts of Communion; the one Spiritual, the other Sacramental; ſo there are two ſorts of Confeſſion, the Spiritual and the Sacramental. The one is made to Almighty God in the ear of a Prieſt, and the other to God alone, accuſing ourſelves in his preſence of all we think we have offended him in; and exciting ourſelves to the ſame affections of ſorrow, hatred, and purpoſe of amendment, as when we confeſs Sacramentally.

This ſort of Confeſſion is very profitable and uſeful, and is the beſt diſpoſition for Sacramental Confeſſion, and as ſpiritual Communion ſupplies for the Sacramental, ſo does ſpiritual Confeſſion for Sacramental Confeſſion.

By practiſing this, we ſhall acquire a greater purity of ſoul, and the oftener we

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we perform it, the more will our ſouls be waſhed and cleanſed from our ſins, and become more beautiful in the ſight of God; and if Death ſhould ſurpriſe us, ſo that we could not confeſs Sacramentally, this might ſuffice to ſave us.

Whenever we make this Spiritual Confeſſion, we muſt place ourſelves in ſpirit at the feet of Chriſt Crucified, beholding the ſeveral Wounds our ſins have cauſed him.

Then beg light to ſee and underſtand our ſins; after which we muſt accuſe ourſelves of them, and when we accuſe ourſelves of the greateſt, we muſt do it with a particular ſentiment of humility and penance.

Contrition is the principal part both of Spiritual and Sacramental Confeſſion, and ought to be rather interior motions of the ſoul, than exterior words. It conſiſts in being heartily ſorry for having offended ſo good a God. To excite us to it, we may reflect on that which follows; but are not obliged to make uſe of all, one may ſuffice, according as we find ourſelves moved.

Firſt, I who have offended God, am not only a Chriſtian, but a Religious per-

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ſon, prevented, and obliged by ſo many benefits, eating the bread of his houſe, and eſteemed for his Child, Spouſe, and Servant.

2dly, By ſinning, I have preferred a bawble, a thing of no conſequence, before Almighty God, and this whilſt he has the goodneſs to ſuſtain and ſupport me, and whilſt I actually enjoy his benefits.

3dly, The little reſpect for his preſence, ſinning before his Divine Majeſty, and diſhonouring our Saviour's Paſſion.

4thly, The number of times, which ſurpaſſes the hairs of my head.

Having excited in our ſouls a true ſorrow, and reſolution never more to offend deliberately, though there were contained in any ſin all the honours, riches, and pleaſures that have been, or ever will be in the world; or that we ſhould know for certain, that after having offended, we ſhould neither have remorſe of conſcience, nor be puniſhed in this world nor the next, and ſhould, by ſinning, avoid pain or confuſion; yet for the Love of God we would not offend him. Then, with Humility and Sorrow, let us beg Pardon of his Divine Majeſty, ſaying,

Dear

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Dear Lord, if ever you ſhewed yourſelf a God of mercy, now is the time to appear ſo; for behold in your preſence a monſter of ingratitude, after all you have done to purchaſe my Salvation.

If heaven was amazed at the ſight of a God crucified and dying, behold a new ſubject of amazement, and exceſs of goodneſs on the one ſide, and of ingratitude on the other. So much ſufferings and Blood, ſuch precious Blood ſhed for me, which by my offences I have trampled under foot, yet I hope for pardon; for it was never heard ſince the world had a being, that a ſinner with ſorrow aſked your pardon and was refuſed. Your word ſtands engaged for it, that at what hour ſoever a ſinner ſhall be truly ſorry, you will pardon him. Dear Lord, either blot this out of your Book, or pardon and forgive me now.

SEC. II.

Of Sacramental Confeſſion.

As the benefit of the Sacraments is the greateſt help we have in this life, ſo on the good and frequent uſe of them, depends

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pends not only our pefection but Salvation alſo; for thereby we receive increaſe of grace and ſtrength to amend our lives; and the merits of Chriſt are applied to us as often as we frequent them. But this in proportion to the diſpoſitions we bring.

By Confeſſion we are delivered from the greateſt of evils, which is ſin. Frequent confeſſion is a perpetual application of the benefit of our Redemption, which blots out our paſt ſins, and gives us ſtrength to avoid them for the future.

Nothing conduces more to our Salvation and perfection, than often frequenting the Sacrament of Penance; becauſe, by the reiterated application of the Blood of Chriſt, our hearts are more diſengaged and purified from ſin; for it not only blots out the paſt, but gives us grace and ſtrength to avoid committing new ones, and maintains in us the ſpirit of Penance, which is ſo pleaſing to God, and ſo neceſſary for Salvation.

The requiſite diſpoſitions to receive the benefit of the Sacraments, are Humility and Purity of intention, which muſt be to pleaſe God, and to unite ourſelves to him.

To

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To make a good Confeſſion, depends not ſo much on having a good Memory and a good Tongue, as on the having a good Heart, a good Will, a ſincere deteſtation of our ſins, and a firm reſolution to correct them.

We ought ever to go to Confeſſion as if it were to gain a jubilee, looking on it as the application of Chriſt's blood to our ſouls for the Remiſſion of our ſins and increaſe of grace. We ſhould endeavour to go to it with the ſame diſpoſitions as to communion.

Prayers before examen of Conſcience.

I render you infinite thanks, dear Lord, for having inſtituted this Sacrament of Penance, by means of which I may obtain pardon of all my ſins, and re-enter into favour and friendſhip with you; nay, even become ſtill more united to you. Dear Lord, give thoſe diſpoſitions to my ſoul, which may, by means of this Sacrament, effect this to your greater Glory.

Divine Spirit, by the Sacred Wounds of Jeſus, I beg light to ſee and know my ſins, and the grace to be truly ſorry for them,

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them, and to confeſs them with due diſpoſitions.

Mother of mercy and refuge of ſinners, obtain me the grace ſo to approach this Sacrament, that I may by it be cleanſed and purified of all ſins.

O Holy Angel my Guardian, you have been witneſs of all I have done amiſs, remind me of my offences, help me to confeſs them as I ought, and beg pardon of Almighty God for me.

O my God, ſince on the Sanctity of my Confeſſion depends my perfection and eternal Salvation, and that I cannot perform them as I ought, but by the aſſiſtance of your grace; give me that light neceſſary to know my ſins, and that Humility with which I ought to confeſs them. Give me alſo your love, that I may have a perfect Contrition for them and your grace, that for the future I may avoid them.

Then we muſt quietly and peaceably examine our Conſcience, following therein the directions of our Ghoſtly Father. Which being done, we muſt endeavour to make an act of Contrition, which is ſo eaſy with God's grace, that a moment may conceive it, and an inſtant produce it;

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it; and ſo powerful, that it obtains pardon of all we have offended in. Almighty God aſſures us of this by the mouth of his Prophet, ſaying, *Sigh, and you ſhall be ſaved.* But then it muſt proceed from love, and not from ſervile fear, as a good child, who grieves more for having diſpleaſed his Father, than for being diſinherited by him.

Contrition conſiſts not in tears or any ſenſible motion, for it may be had with a heart as cold as marble, and as hard as braſs. But it conſiſts in all ſpiritual operation of the will by which we deteſt ſin, becauſe it diſpleaſes and offends God, whom we are bound to love above all things. It muſt be univerſal, extending to all, without reſerve of affection to any thing that is oppoſite to his Divine Love and liking. It muſt precede, if not Confeſſion, at leaſt Abſolution.

A Prayer to beg Contrition.

Dear Jeſus, I deſire with my whole heart to have all the contrition for my ſins that you deſire I ſhould have; but you know I cannot have it, unleſs you in your mercy beſtow it upon me. It is what

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what I moſt humbly beg by your Sacred Wounds and Precious Blood, *ſince you will not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he be converted and live*; convert me then, and I ſhall be truly converted.

To move us to a true Contrition.

We may imagine ourſelves at the feet of Chriſt Crucified, and that he ſays to us from the Croſs, *What could I do more for you than I have done?* Let us look on the ſad ſtate he is reduced to for our ſakes, and to ſatisfy for our ſins, and to ſay to him,

Dear Lord, This is the work of your goodneſs and my malice, How can I behold it and not die with grief? How is it poſſible I can take content and pleaſure, after having been the cauſe of all I ſee you ſuffer?

Dear Jeſus, by the wounds I have cauſed you, and the Blood I have made you ſhed, and by your holy name which I have profaned, I beg you to have mercy on me, and to pardon me, for I heartily grieve for the very leaſt of my offences, as having by them offended and diſhonoured you. Yet I will hope in you, for

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for however enormous my ſins are, they cannot equal your mercies and merits; which merits I offer to your juſtice in full ſatisfaction for them.

Eternal Father, I offer you the infinite merits of your dear Son, in ſatisfaction for my ſins, and to beg you will ſhew the efficacy of your Son's merits by granting me what I aſk, which is pardon of ſins, I aſk it in his name, and your honour is engaged to hear him and them, whom he commands to aſk in his name, and to whom he communicates his merits and credit. I am one of them, honour him therefore by granting me my requeſt, ſince it is in his name I aſk it.

Receive for me the ſatisfaction which Jeſus your Son paid you on my account, dying on a Croſs; that is abundantly ſufficient to ſatisfy not only for my ſins, but for thoſe of all mankind; for the Sacred merits of my Saviour, pardon me all my offences.

I purpoſe, with the aſſiſtance of your grace, (which I hope to receive by means of this Sacrament) to fly from all that diſpleaſes you, and not to offend you deliberately in any thing; eſpecially with

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your grace I will avoid ſuch and ſuch a ſin, between this and my next Confeſſion.

Let us not fail in this to ſecure the validity of our Confeſſions; which done, and being quite ready, let us ſay the following Prayer:

My God, I offer you the Confeſſion I am going to make, for your greater glory, and to obey your will, and to render my ſoul more pleaſing to you, by being waſhed in the Precious Blood of your Son, and to ſatisfy your Juſtice by humble Confeſſion of my ſins, and repair the diſhonour they have done you, and to obtain your mercy and that Sanctifying Grace, which will preſerve me from farther ſins, and for all the intentions I ought to offer it for to gain whatever Pardon and Indulgence may be gained between this and next Confeſſion, and that degree of your love and grace your mercy has deſigned me.

Since, dear Lord, you have ſhed your Blood for me, be pleaſed to apply the merits of it, by the abſolution I am going to receive; one drop is ſufficient to blot out,

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out, and I confide in your goodneſs and mercy it will.

Grant to my ſoul, in making this Confeſſion, all the requiſite diſpoſitions of Humility and perfect Contrition, which I ought to have in order to pleaſe and glorify you, and ſanctify myſelf. Caſt an eye of pity on my ſinful ſoul, and regard not ſo much the evils I have done as your own infinite mercies, and the merits of my Saviour. If I have committed what deſerves Damnation, he has done more than ſufficient to merit my Salvation. With this confidence I will go to the Tribunal of your Mercies, in which I beg you will confirm in heaven the abſolution I ſhall receive from your Miniſter on earth; and let it extend to all the ſins of my life, all which I am truly ſorry for, and abhor and deteſt them for love of you. I offer you the ſorrow which your Divine Heart ſuffered at the ſight of my ſins, for that which is wanting in me. I beg, through the merits of that Sacred Heart, that you will cleanſe me from them, and grant me the grace to avoid them for the future.

My Lord, I acknowledge that ſince my laſt Confeſſion I have done much evil,

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and ſcarce any good; or if I have, it has been done with ſo much negligence, that it can be counted for nothing; in fine, the whole time ſince has been days void of virtue and full of irregularity. I am, dear Lord, an ungrateful, unfaithful, and perfidious Wretch, which deſerves that you ſhould ſhut for ever, in my regard, that wholeſome Fountain which you have eſtabliſhed in your Church, to waſh me from my ſins; this is what I might expect from your Juſtice; but when I reflect on your mercy, which is never wearied in ſeeking after the loſt ſheep; and when found, you treat it with an ineffable Sweetneſs; far from giving way to deſpair, I hope, with a firm confidence, the pardon of my offences, with which confidence I will go to the Tribunal of your Mercy to receive it.

When we go to Confeſſion we muſt conſider Chriſt as Chief and Supreme Prieſt, and, with joined hands and profound humility, make our Confeſſion and deſire rather to appear bad than good in the mind of our Confeſſor, for thereby God will receive greater glory, and we greater graces.

We

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We must receive absolution as if Christ visibly gave it, since it is really he that gives it by the Mouth of the Priest, applying to our souls the Blood he shed upon Mount Calvary. Let us endeavour, in time of it, to increase our sorrow for all our sins, that we may concur with the Priest to the remission of them, and the infusion of God's Grace into our souls; for proportionably as we increase in sorrow, we shall receive augmentation of Grace.

Returning from Confession say,

My soul does magnify you, O Lord, and my spirit rejoices in you, my God and Saviour, because you have regarded the humility and penance of me your unworthy Creature; therefore, with your grace, the remainder of my life shall be blessed. Or else say, *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes*, &c.

Go straight to the choir, and, if possible, without speaking to any; and in thanksgiving to God for so great a benefit say,

Be pleased, dear Lord, to ratify in heaven the Absolution which your Minister has performed in your Name on earth;

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receive the Confeſſion I come from making, and finiſh the work your mercy has begun, by delivering me from theſe weakneſſes and miſeries my ſins have cauſed in me; and grant me the grace never more deliberately to offend you.

Let my ſoul bleſs you, my God, and let all in me praiſe your moſt Holy Name, for having admitted me to this Sacrament. Let all your Saints and Angels praiſe you for it. Receive alſo thoſe Praiſes and Thanks which your only Son, my God and Saviour, renders you, and will for ever pay you for the benefits which, through his merits, you are pleaſed to do us unworthy members.

I offer my Saviour's merits in ſatisfaction for all my defects in this or any other of my Confeſſions, begging pardon for them through the ſame merits, and that the Abſolution which I have received from your Miniſter on earth, may extend to all the ſins of my life, which I am heartily ſorry for.

Receive, O Eternal Father, the ſatisfaction which my Saviour made you expiring on the Croſs, and let it not only ſatisfy for all my debts to your Divine Majeſty, but alſo obtain me the graces neceſſary

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neceſſary to amend what diſpleaſes you in me; and to love and ſerve you the remainder of my life as I ought.

Then with great Devotion and gratitude perform your Penance, and unite it with the merits of Chriſt; after which, it is adviſable to accept, by way of Penance, of all the Croſſes, Chagrins, and Mortifications which may befall us between this and our next Confeſſion, as being ordained by Almighty God, who is pleaſed to add that Penance to that which has been given us in the Sacrament, both that we may ſatisfy for our ſins, and increaſe our merit. Let us beg him to grant us the grace to make the beſt uſe of them.

Here we ſhould renew the purpoſe, we made before Confeſſion, of not voluntarily offending his Divine Majeſty, eſpecially by ſuch or ſuch a ſin; but as we can do nothing of ourſelves, we muſt not rely upon our reſolutions, however ſtrong they are, but upon God's aſſiſtant grace only, which he will not deny us if we aſk it of him, through the merits of Chriſt, as we ought.

O Eternal Father, for the love you bear your Son, and for the glory he rendered

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dered you by his death, pardon me all my ſins, and give me the grace to avoid them for the future.

My God and Saviour, let the remembrance of this incomparable favour never go out of my memory; let me think thereof day and night, and never without gratitude and love; and grant me the grace that the author of all good be ever preſent to my mind. It is he who, by a mercy that cannot be ſufficiently admired, pardons me all my ſins, when the pardon of one only is a favour that a thouſand years ſervices cannot worthily acknowledge: How then can I acknowledge a goodneſs that remits me innumerable ones?

The remainder of the day we muſt, with the Divine Aſſiſtance, be careful to comport ourſelves ſo as to do nothing unworthy of the grace conferred on us in the Sacrament of Penance.

From which time we ought to begin to prepare ourſelves for Communion, by a great deſire to receive Chriſt, in whoſe Precious Blood our ſouls have been waſhed. We may ſay from time to time,

Sweet Jeſus, ſince your love is not content with what you have already done for me,

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me, by applying your Precious Blood to my ſoul, to waſh it from its Offences; but you alſo invite me to receive yet a greater favour, to wit, your Divine Self. Diſpoſe my heart, I beſeech you, for it, for none but you can do it.

A Prayer to our Bleſſed Lady, to beg the due Diſpoſitions for Communion.

O moſt Bleſſed Virgin, and moſt worthy Mother of God, whom you conceived in your chaſte Womb, whoſe adorable Body and Blood he received from you. It concerns you that he be received with all the reſpect and honour he deſerves, and that he be not unworthily treated by thoſe on whom he beſtows himſelf with ſo much love. It is therefore that I addreſs myſelf to you, to beg you will obtain of him for me all the bleſſings I ſtand in need of, to receive him worthily. Beg him to take poſſeſſion of my heart by love, before he enters my body by the Sacrament. Obtain of him for me, all the Diſpoſitions and Virtues which may render me pleaſing to him, eſpecially thoſe two, which rendered you deſervedly his Mother, which is Purity

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Purity and Humility, that he may find nothing in me that may ſavour of either impurity or pride, both which I deteſt from my heart, and am reſolved, for the future, to endeavour to acquire the two contrary Virtues, thereby to pleaſe him and imitate you; begging for this, his grace, by your all-powerful interceſſion, which I now implore with my whole heart.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of Communion.

SEC. I.

Three Days Preparation for Communion, before all great Feaſts.

The Bleſſed Sacrament which we are to receive, is the pledge of eternal life, and our Viaticum to bring us to it. It muſt put us in mind of the end for which God created us, and placed us in this world; which was, to render us happy to Eternity, of the ſame happineſs which his Divine Majeſty and his Saints enjoy. To prepare ourſelves for this Divine Sacrament,

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crament, beſides the ordinary preparation, which conſiſts in a greater care to perform our Spiritual actions well, and to avoid all offence of God, a withdrawing from all unneceſſary diſcourſes; more frequent aſpirations to beg of his Divine Majeſty whatever may diſpoſe us for Confeſſion and Communion; and the practice of Mortification and Self-denial, eſpecially as to what may be neceſſay for the performing all our duties well: Beſides all this, I ſay, we ſhould do well to obſerve that which follows:

For the firſt Day.

1. Addreſs yourſelf to the Eternal Father, who, out of his pure goodneſs, has made choice of you, to make you happy for Eternity with his own happineſs, and nouriſhes you with his own food, which is the knowledge, love, and enjoyment of himſelf.

2. Admire his goodneſs, thank him for it, and beg his Divine Majeſty to grant you the grace worthily to prepare yourſelf for Communion, which is a foretaſte of that happineſs.

3. Addreſs

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3. Addreſs yourſelf to our Bleſſed Lady, as to her that was firſt choſen for that happineſs, begging her, in your behalf, to return the Eternal Father thanks for creating you for that end; and beſeech her to obtain you the grace to communicate worthily, ſaying three *Ave Marias* for that effect.

If it be the feaſt of ſome Saint, congratulate with him for his Felicity, and beg him to pray for you, that you may worthily receive that God he beholds face to face.

Second Day.

1. Addreſs yourſelf to God the Son, by whoſe merits you have been choſen for Eternal Bliſs, and who, by his Croſs and Blood, has marked the place for each of his Elect.

Conſider how much he laboured and ſuffered to open the gates of heaven for you, and to merit you the grace to arrive to that bliſs; among other means he has left himſelf in the moſt Bleſſed Sacrament, that by receiving him who is the Holy of Holies, you may become holy here and happy for Eternity.

2. Thank

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2. Thank our Saviour for all he has done and ſuffered, to open heaven to you, and to make you a Saint. Beg him by the merit of his Communion on the eve of his Death, when he received himſelf in that Divine Sacrament, that you may worthily receive him, and ſo render the labours and pains he has taken for you, fruitful and efficacious.

3. Beg our Bleſſed Lady, who conceived him, and afterwards, by frequent Communions, received him, and thereby ſo great a degree of Sanctity, that ſhe would pleaſe to obtain you the diſpoſitions you ought to have to receive him worthily, for which effect ſay three *Ave Marias*.

4. If it be the feaſt of ſome Saint, congratulate with the Saint, for having made ſuch good uſe of the Precious Blood and merits of Chriſt, as to poſſeſs the glory he merited for him. Beg the Bleſſed Saint to obtain you the grace ſo to communicate, that it may merit you the poſſeſſion of the glory your Saviour has purchaſed for you.

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The Third Day.

1. Addreſs yourſelf to the Holy Ghoſt, by whoſe Grace and Aid you muſt acquire the Sanctity which Chriſt has purchaſed for you. Admire the diverſe means he makes uſe of to draw your affections from the things of this World, and to bring you to true Sanctity.

2. Thank him for all the inſpirations and lights he has given you, in order to your attaining true Sanctity, which is found in real Purity of Heart. Beg the Divine Spirit to purify and diſpoſe yours to receive him.

3. Beg our Bleſſed Lady, as ſhe is Spouſe to the Holy Ghoſt, to obtain for you of that Divine Spirit, the like diſpoſitions which ſhe had in her ſoul whenever ſhe communicated; for that effect ſay three *Ave Marias*.

4. If the Feaſt be of any Saint, congratulate with the Saint for having ſo well followed the motions of the Holy Ghoſt, as thereby to have gained ſo great Sanctity. Beg him to obtain you the grace, ſo to confeſs and communicate, that you may

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may attain to that degree of Sanctity which God requires of you.

SEC. II.

Three Days Preparation for Communion, Before the Feasts of our Blessed Lady.

Besides the ordinary Preparations, as page 154 and 155, we should do well to make the following reflections.

For the Morning of the First Day.

1. Reflect, and give thanks to God the Father for chusing the Blessed Virgin for his Daughter, and for all the favours and graces he did her on that account.

2. Thank his Divine Majesty for that, through his mercy, he has chosen you for his adopted child, and for giving you all helps to render you worthy of that honour. Offer him in return all the thanks that are rendered him in heaven and upon earth.

3. Beg him, by the merits of our Blessed Lady, to grant you the grace to make so good a Confession and Communion,

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that you may thereby obtain the eternal inheritance he has designed you as his child.

In the Afternoon.

1. Rejoice, and congratulate with our Blessed Lady, for being chosen, particularly before all others, to be Daughter to the Eternal Father. Reflect on the Privileges and Advantages she has by the same.

2. Beg our Lady to obtain for you the grace to confess and communicate, after such a manner, that you may by means of the same be for ever numbered amongst the children and Elect of God.

For the Morning of the second Day.

1. Reflect, and give thanks to God the Son for having chosen our Blessed Lady before all others, for his most Blessed Mother, and for giving her all that was suitable to so high a dignity.

2. Thank our Saviour for mercifully designing you a like favour by Holy Communion; since you are to receive into your Breast, the same Jesus she bore in her Womb.

3. Beg

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3. Beg him, for the merits of his Bleſſed Mother, to grant you a ſhare of thoſe graces and favours he beſtowed upon her, that you may worthily bear in your boſom him ſhe carried in her Womb.

For the Afternoon.

1. Rejoice, and congratulate with our Bleſſed Lady, for the choice her Son made of her to be his Mother, and for giving her the grace to merit that title by her actions.

2. Beg her to obtain you the grace worthily to receive her Son; and that you may, by this Communion, ſupply for the defects you have committed in your others.

For the Morning of the third Day.

1. Reflect, and give thanks to God the Holy Ghoſt, for having choſen the Bleſſed Virgin, before all others, to be his Sacred Spouſe, and for having adorned her ſoul as was requiſite for ſuch a dignity.

2. Thank the Divine Spirit for having eſpouſed you to himſelf in Holy Baptiſm

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and Holy Religion, and for being pleased to visit and dwell in your soul, by Holy Communion, as in his Temple.

3. Beg him so to adorn your soul, as to render it a worthy and pleasing habitation to his Divine Majesty.

For the Afternoon.

1. Rejoice, and congratulate with our Blessed Lady for that infinite honour of being Spouse to God the Holy Ghost, and for the merits he gave her to render her worthy of it.

2. Beg her to obtain you requisite graces to perform well so important an action as is Communion.

SEC. III.

On Ordinary Communion Eves.

Besides the ordinary preparation, 154 and 155, we must entertain our thoughts as follows.

For

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For the Morning.

1. Reflect on the great Desire our Lord had to institute and receive with his Apostles, this Holy Sacrament, *With a longing desire* (says he) *have I desired to eat this Pasche with you before I suffer.*

2. To excite a great desire to receive him who pleased so ardently to desire the giving himself to us. Let us reflect who it is that comes; the end for which he comes; and the advantages which we shall receive by his coming, if we on our side prepare ourselves well to receive him.

3. Beg our Blessed Lady, by the ardent desire she had to receive her Divine Son in this adorable Sacrament, to obtain you a great desire of that happiness.

After Dinner.

1. Reflect upon the Humility which our Lord practised before he instituted this Sacrament, washing the feet of his Apostles; and then remaining alone without splendor, or lustre in this adorable Mystery, to shew us how pleasing this virtue

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virtue is to him, and how neceſſary to diſpoſe us for Communion.

2. During the day make acts of it, acknowledging yourſelf not only nothing, but worſe than nothing, by reaſon of your ſins; and if any honour be rendered you, receive it not as due to you, but refer it all to God.

3. Beg our Lady, by her great humility, which drew the Almighty into her Womb, and rendered her ſo pleaſing to him, to obtain you that virtue, and ſay the *Salve Regina* for that effect.

After Veſpers.

1. Reflect that our Lord, by waſhing his Apoſtles' feet before he gave himſelf to them, would give us to underſtand the Purity with which we ought to approach to Holy Communion.

2. That you may obtain this Purity, you muſt, by frequent acts of Contrition, endeavour to expiate your paſt ſins, and be careful not to commit new ones.

3. Beg our Bleſſed Lady, by the great Purity with which ſhe received God into her Womb, and afterwards into her breaſt by Holy Communion, to obtain you

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you what is neceſſary and fitting to communicate worthily.

SEC. IV.

For Communion.

After having performed all that belongs to Confeſſion, we ſhould wholly entertain our thoughts with what may diſpoſe us for Communion; and as Spiritual Communion is the beſt Diſpoſition for the Sacramental, ſo we cannot do better than to communicate Spiritually from time to time. This is done by believing God preſent, and humbling ourſelves to our own nothing, ardently deſiring (if ſo happy as to be in the State of Grace) to receive him for the ſame end for which he would be received; which is, that he may live in us and we in him.

Jeſus comes to each ſoul in Communion, to unite himſelf to her after a particular manner, according to the degree of perfection he calls her to, every one having a particular degree which diſtinguiſhes her from another, and the graces given in Communion are to advance her to that degree which God has deſigned her.

To

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To concur with God's designs, and prepare and dispose ourselves to receive those graces he intends us by Communion, let us from six o'clock over night (if not hindered by obedience or charity) withdraw ourselves from all other concerns, and entirely give our attention to what may dispose and prepare us for Communion; being careful to keep the silence ordained by our statutes for that effect.

In order to animate us the more to this practice, and to incline us to employ that hour in some pious duties; we may reflect that it was at the same hour, to wit, six o'clock, that Christ on the Eve of his Passion eat the Paschal Lamb with his Apostles, and instituted this Sacrament, which he did as his own words express it.

1. That he might remain with us for ever.

2. That it might be to us a perpetual memory of his Death and Passion, suffered for our sakes.

3. That as he lived for his Father, so we might live for him, by receiving him in the Blessed Sacrament.

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As theſe were our Lord's deſigns in inſtituting this Sacrament, ſo they muſt be ours in receiving him; and we muſt not only beg him to effect them in us, but muſt alſo on our ſide concur to the ſame.

We ſhould do well to reflect and ſee over night, what intentions we deſign to communicate for, and to offer our Communion then, repeating the ſame again the next morning before we communicate, a proper time for which is the offertory of the Maſs; and it may be done as follows.

General Intentions for Communion.

Since you are pleaſed, my God, to expreſs ſo great a deſire that I receive you, as to threaten me with puniſhment if I refuſe to come, (though no puniſhment, dear Lord, could equal that of being deprived of this happineſs!) 'tis to obey your Bleſſed Will that I approach, and I offer this Communion in obedience to your divine Will; for the increaſe of your glory; for all the deſigns you had in inſtituting this adorable Sacrament, and for thoſe you have over my ſoul; to beg they

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they may be perfectly accompliſhed, and that you may be in me what you ſhould be, and may deſtroy in me what is mine, and oppoſite to you, taking an entire poſſeſſion of my heart, that I may be united to you with a more perfect love.

'Tis to obtain the accompliſhment of your promiſes, to wit, *That thoſe who eat your Fleſh, and drink your Blood, ſhall live for ever.* And *as you live for your Father, ſo thoſe that receive you, ſhall live for you.* 'Tis likewiſe to obtain the pardon of my ſins and offences; grace to overcome all my ſpiritual enemies, and to be faithful to your love in all temptations; alſo to beg an increaſe of charity and all other virtues, eſpecially a perfect ſubmiſſion to your bleſſed will in all the accidents of this life.

Grant that the receiving your Sacred Body, which I do in memory of, and thankſgiving for your moſt bitter Death and Paſſion ſuffered for me, may be to me a pledge of Eternal Life. I offer it alſo for the exaltation of our Holy Mother the Church, for the extirpation of Hereſies, and converſion of all Miſbelievers; for Peace and Union among Chriſtian Kings and Princes; and for all the

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the intentions for which I ought to offer it: alſo to get whatever pardon or indulgence may be gained; and moreover for all the intentions which may be for the increaſe of your Honour and Glory: and to beg you will pleaſe to augment your grace in the hearts of all your Elect, eſpecially thoſe I am obliged to pray for, as N. N. and each one of this Community, which I beſeech you to bleſs, preſerve, and keep united in the bond of perfect Charity.

Beſides theſe general intentions, 'tis adviſable to join ſome particular ones, according to the view or deſign propoſed to ourſelves in each Communion; as to partake of the Myſtery of the Feaſt we ſolemnize; to correct ſome fault; to acquire ſome particular virtue which we find the greateſt want of; to return thanks for ſome grace or favour which we have received; to obtain the ſpirit of our particular examen, and the grace to be faithful in it; to pray for any that have recommended themſelves to our Prayers, &c.

We muſt endeavour at night immediately before we go to reſt, and in the morning as ſoon as awake, to poſſeſs our

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minds with the happineſs we hope for, which is to receive God, begging him to give us due diſpoſitions to receive him worthily.

Aſpirations at our Firſt Awaking.

O my God, I offer my heart and ſoul, in which this day you deſign to lodge; take them, for they are yours, and prepare them as you would have them prepared.

The duties we are employed in from that time till Holy Maſs, are the fitteſt to diſpoſe us for Communion, they being the Divine Office and mental Prayer: let us endeavour to perform them in ſuch a manner that we may be thereby duly diſpoſed.

As Holy Communion is an action of the greateſt importance, and that we cannot of ourſelves have due diſpoſitions unleſs God is pleaſed to give them to us; therefore to obtain them of him we cannot do better than to addreſs ourſelves to our Bleſſed Lady, ſhe having the moſt intereſt in the worthy reception of her Son, and alſo the moſt power to obtain us all that is neceſſary for that

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that effect; and as ſhe is our Mother, ſhe is truly deſirous of our good; and what greater good can ſhe procure us than to receive the Body and Blood of her Son in ſuch a manner that we may partake of his ſpirit, and be united to him for time and for Eternity.

Another motive for making our addreſſes to her, is to render ourſelves more pleaſing to our dear Redeemer who choſe to come to us by her means, ſo we cannot do better than by her means and under her Protection, to go to him; nor can we offer him any thing more acceptable, or of greater value (next to his own merits) than thoſe of his Bleſſed Mother, to ſupply for what is wanting in us.

At the Beginning of the Maſs.

Offer to Chriſt the enflamed Love, and Holy Diſpoſitions with which his Bleſſed Mother preſented both him and herſelf to his Eternal Father in the Temple; to ſupply for what is wanting in you, and beg our Lady to make you partaker of it by her interceſſion, that you may

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the more worthily receive her Divine Son.

At the Kyries. Offer to our Saviour his Bleſſed Mother's Hatred and entire ſeparation from the leaſt ſin or offence, and for her merits, beg him to pardon all thoſe you have committed.

At the Goſpel. Offer him her Faith, which was the ſource of all her happineſs, and made her prefer God's Will to all other advantages; ſo preſent her perfect Faith to obtain Pardon for your having ſo often done the contrary.

At the Offertory. Take up your thoughts, and unite yourſelf to that perfect Adoration which Chriſt renders to his Eternal Father; and congratulate with our Lady that her Son only can worthily honour God: beg her to obtain you the grace to adore him in ſpirit and truth, and to be ever grateful to him for his mercies to you, and to be willing to ſatisfy his Juſtice, by patiently ſuffering whatever he ſhall permit.

From Sanctus till the Elevation. To obey Chriſt's Orders in commemorating his Death and Paſſion, accompany our Lady in ſpirit, and remain with her at the foot of the Croſs, where ſhe ſtood immoveable.

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immoveable. There it was that her ſoul was pierced with the ſword of grief at the ſight of her ſuffering Son, yet ever perfectly ſubmiſſive to the will of God. Who can expreſs what ſhe ſuffered when ſhe heard her Divine Son complain of being abandoned by his Eternal Father! with reſpect ſhe adored the Divine Conduct, at the ſame time ſo holy and afflicting! ſhe could not ſweeten the bitterneſs of her Son's Chalice, but ſhe honoured the Sovereign Authority of his Father which made him ſuffer ſo.

Here we muſt humble ourſelves and beg pardon, acknowledging we are the unhappy cauſe of the ſufferings, both of the Son and of the Mother; begging our Lady to obtain that the merit of thoſe ſufferings may be now applied to our ſouls to make them fitter habitations for her Divine Son.

At the Pater Noſter. We ought to ſay it with the Prieſt, and unite ourſelves both to the ſentiments of Chriſt when he taught it, and to our Lady's when ſhe recited it.

At Agnus Dei. Reflect that this Divine Lamb without ſpot, which our Lady bore nine months in her womb, and

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which was ſlain for our ſalvation, will enter our hearts to apply the Precious Blood he ſhed, thereby to purify them from the ſpots and ſtains of ſin; let us beg our Lady to obtain us due diſpoſitions to receive the full benefit of that Precious Blood.

The happy moment drawing near which will put us in poſſeſſion of our God, we muſt with a new fervour diſpoſe ourſelves by the following Acts.

Of Faith.

I firmly believe that in this Sacrament is contained my God and Saviour, who gave his life for my Salvation, and through whoſe merits I only hope it. I believe 'tis the ſame Lord who while he remained on earth raiſed the dead and cured the ſick, and never refuſed to ſuccour thoſe that addreſſed themſelves to him, and that he is not leſs powerful and willing now, than he was then.

Of Hope.

Dear Lord, what may I not expect and hope from your love, who in your Death

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Death gave yourſelf for me, and in this Sacrament ſtill give yourſelf to me? I hope for no leſs than the accompliſhment of the promiſes you are pleaſed to make to them that ſhall receive you in this Sacrament; and that you will apply to my ſoul the merits of your Paſſion, and give me thoſe graces which are the fruit of your Death; and that you will not permit that my receiving this Sacrament, which you inſtituted for my Salvation, and which I do to obey your will, ſhould through any unworthineſs of mine prove my condemnation.

Of Love.

Give yourſelf to me, my God, for I love you, but if not enough, make me love you more. I am going to caſt myſelf into your arms, nay into your heart, let me never be ſeparated from you; take poſſeſſion of mine, which truly deſires to receive you, that ſo I may be for ever united to you.

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Of Humility.

What am I, O my God, that you ſhould come to me! I acknowledge myſelf infinitely unworthy of this honour; for though I had the burning flames of the Seraphims, and your Bleſſed Mother's fullneſs of grace, I ſhould be ſtill infinitely unworthy to receive you. What then muſt I be who am ſo far from this, that I have no good in me! and therefore I own myſelf unworthy of the leaſt of your favours, and much more of this; but ſince it is your will that I receive you, purify my heart before you enter it; ſay but the word, and my ſoul ſhall be ſaved.

Of Deſire.

Come, ſweet Jeſus, for I truly deſire to receive you. Give yourſelf to me, and that ſuffices me; but in giving yourſelf to me, grant me the grace to give myſelf entirely to you: for Communion does not only give you to me, but alſo gives me to you, according to your own words, *he that eats my Fleſh remains in me, and I in him*; and again, *he that eats me,*

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me, the ſame ſhall live by me. Grant me but that, and I deſire no more.

Of Obedience.

Lord, ſince 'tis your will and pleaſure that I ſhould receive you, commanding me to come, if I would have my part with you, I approach, yet no ways preſuming on myſelf, but relying on your goodneſs, which I know to be infinite, hoping you will receive in mercy her, who comes to you with confidence, and acknowledges no good in herſelf, but much the contrary. If your Divine Eye ſees any ſin in my ſoul which might render it criminal, I beg you will forgive it, for with my whole heart I deteſt it, and all that may offend or diſpleaſe you in me.

Offering.

Dear Lord, in lieu of thoſe diſpoſitions which are wanting in me, I offer you all the Love, Humility, Purity, Devotion, and other Preparations with which you have been received by all pious ſouls, and even by your Bleſſed Mother, wiſhing

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wiſhing they were all mine for no other end than that I might receive you more worthily.

Petition.

O my God, grant me thoſe diſpoſitions which I ought to have, and which you only can give me, that I may not only receive your precious Body and Blood, but the effects and virtue of them; ſo that in receiving you I may partake of your ſpirit, and be united to you for time and for eternity, which I ardently deſire.

Dear Lord, receive yourſelf in the midſt of my heart, and glorify yourſelf there, as it ſhall be moſt agreeable to you: and let your love and divine diſpoſitions ſupply for all that is wanting in me. And as there is no place worthy of you but yourſelf, nor any love with which you can be worthily received, but that which you have for yourſelf, that you may be worthily received in me, I annihilate myſelf at your feet and all that is in me, and give myſelf to you, that coming to me by Communion, you may be received not in me, but in yourſelf, and with the love

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love you bear yourſelf; and (that way) as worthily as you deſerve.

With this diſpoſition, of being nothing in your own conceit, and deſire nothing but the poſſeſſion of God, approach to Holy Communion, for it is of all others the beſt.

Enter, dear Lord, into your own, which is my heart and ſoul: come and dwell for ever there. Let it never be ſaid that you come into your own, and your own would not receive you. I deſire nothing more than to poſſeſs you, and never be ſeparated from you.

SEC. VI.

The Neceſſity and Advantages of employing well the Time after Communion.

It is not only the want of a due preparation before Communion which renders our Communion fruitleſs, but alſo the not employing well the time after; the not managing thoſe precious and favourable moments as we ought, in which our Lord remains with us. In each of thoſe moments he both can and would beſtow great favours upon us, if we did but diſpoſe ourſelves to receive them, or at

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at leaſt did not put an obſtacle to them, by any voluntary diſtraction or diſſipation of mind; had it not been for this, the graces we ſhould have received in Holy Communion would have worked wonders in us, for we might gain in one Communion ſufficient to enrich us for ever.

How we ought to employ thoſe precious Moments.

1. To adore, with profound reſpect, the moſt God's Divinity really preſents in our breaſt.

2. To adore the Sacred Humanity, and thoſe wounds he received in it for us, thanking him for them and for all he ſuffered, begging he will be pleaſed to apply the merits of them to our ſouls.

3. To offer him and his merits to his Eternal Father, for to acknowledge his infinite being, to thank him for all his benefits, to ſatisfy for our ſins, and to obtain all we ſtand in need of for our Eternal Salvation.

4. To offer ourſelves, and all we have, in thankſgiving; and not content with that, to offer the praiſes of Angels and men.

5. To

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5. To recommend thoſe we have any obligation to pray for, or thoſe who have recommended themſelves to our Prayers, as alſo to petition for the ſouls in Purgatory.

6. To beg pardon for all defects committed in this or any other Communion.

7. To offer as a grateful return, the amendment of ſome fault, or the practice of ſome virtue between this and the next Communion.

8. Laſtly, To beg our Saviour to beſtow his bleſſing on us, and on our endeavours.

A Manner of performing the ſame.

My Lord and my God, I adore you preſent in me with all the reſpect I am capable of. I acknowledge you as Author of my Being, and my final End. I render you thanks, with all the extent of my heart, for this ineſtimable favour; your power, though infinite, cannot beſtow a greater.

I offer, in return, all the adorations and praiſes of the Bleſſed above; all thoſe which the Sacred Humanity of Chriſt rendered you; and thoſe of his moſt Bleſ-

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fed Mother, after he took Fleſh in her Sacred Womb.

My ſweet Saviour and dear Redeemer, I adore your Sacred Humanity, and your ſoul full of love for me, as alſo thoſe Sacred Wounds which you received in your Body for my Salvation. I render you infinite thanks for them, and for all you ſuffered, and humbly beg you will now apply the merits of them to my ſoul.

My dear Saviour, you are in me living and operating towards your Eternal Father, rendering him thoſe homages which are due to him, and this you deſire to do in the hearts of all your Elect, even to the end of the World. O do it now in mine, and permit me to render them with you: I unite my heart with yours for that purpoſe, and with you, and by you I deſire to adore, praiſe, and love him.

O Eternal Father, who, out of your infinite Mercy and Love, have given me your only Son, with all the treaſures of his merits, to diſpoſe and offer as my own for your glory, and my own particular profit, being pleaſed for that end to have me receive him into my breaſt, as mine and united with me.

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In union then of that Charity, wherewith you give him to me, and that wherewith he offered himſelf for me upon the Croſs, and now gives himſelf to me in this Adorable Sacrament: I offer him and his infinite merits for the everlaſting Praiſe and Glory of your Name, and in acknowledgment of your Sovereignty and Divine Being. I offer him, and all the Praiſes and Thanks he rendered you while on earth, in acknowledgment of all the favours and benefits you have beſtowed on his Sacred Humanity, on his moſt Bleſſed Mother, on the whole Church, and on my unworthy ſelf.

I offer him, and all his Pains, Labours, and Sufferings, in ſatisfaction for all the ſins that have ever been committed, my own in particular.

I offer him and his merits to ſupply for all that is wanting in me, and to obtain of your mercies all that is neceſſary to render me agreeable to your Divine Majeſty, and to ſecure my Salvation. It is in his merits I put all my truſt.

As this Offering is infinitely pleaſing to your Sovereign Majeſty, I extend my requeſts for the whole Church, begging you will repleniſh the ſoul of our Holy

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Father the Pope, and all Prelates and Chriſtian Princes, with all the Graces neceſſary to acquit themſelves worthily of their charges. For ſinners, I beg the ſentiments of true Contrition, and the grace to change and amend their lives. For thoſe in the ſtate of Grace, that they may increaſe in all virtues. For Infidels and Miſbelievers, that they may be converted to the true Faith.

I moſt humbly recommend to your mercies all thoſe I am obliged to pray for, as, each one of this Family, and all my Friends and Relations, beſeeching you, for the ſake of your dear Son, whom I have now received, to give them your grace in ſuch abundance that they may perfectly love and ſerve you. I beg the ſame for my Enemies, whom I pardon with all my heart, and beg yours for them.

Laſtly, I beg you to ſolace and deliver the poor ſuffering ſouls in Purgatory, for the merits of our Saviour's precious Blood ſhed for them, eſpecially N. N. Let your mercy which has pardoned them the impieties of their ſins, put an end to their puniſhment, that they may be ſpeedily

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ſpeedily tranſlated to the ſtate of glory for which you eternally deſigned them.

Then turning to our dear Saviour ſay, Dear Jeſus, you give yourſelf to me with an infinite love, with the ſame I deſire to return myſelf to you, which I do in all the manners I am able, by the promiſes of my Baptiſm, and by the vows of my profeſſion, all which I here renew, and beg your grace to obſerve them conſtantly: I give myſelf to you to diſpoſe of as you pleaſe, deſiring, as far as in me lies, to give you a more ſpecial power over my Body, Soul, Heart, and Actions, leaving myſelf and all that belongs to me to your loving Providence, and to the diſpoſition of your will, with the care and ſucceſs of all my affairs, begging you will pleaſe to give me the grace in all I do, to have for end the advancement of your glory, and the accompliſhment of your Bleſſed Will.

I confide, my ſweet Saviour, in your goodneſs, that having given yourſelf to me, you will not deny me what I want for your glory and my good. I cannot, dear Lord, doubt of your Love, after all you have done for me; but ſince my God you love me, how can you ſee my afflic-

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tions and not comfort me? Can you ſee me have ſo little love for you, and not enflame my heart with more? though you ſhould refuſe me all things elſe, yet grant me that.

Your Heart, my dear Saviour, is full of Love for me; it is that which brings you to ſo vile a Creature as I am. O increated Love! what is it you require of me! nothing but that I love you, and be wholly yours; which I can never be ſo long as I remain tied to the love of myſelf, to my own Judgment and conceits, to every little will of mine, and to my reputation; whereas you require ſelf-hatred for your love, and that forgetting all things elſe I ſhould ſeek nothing but you. O my God, it is your all-powerful hand that can effect this in me, let it be done to me according to your will, and the amorous deſigns of your heart. Take, dear Lord, poſſeſſion of my heart, which has the Honour to poſſeſs you; and love, and glorify yourſelf in me in all the manners you would be loved and glorified, and ſuffer nothing in me to rebel againſt your Will.

Here lay upon all your miſeries to him, and urge for a remedy, ſince it is his will

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will you ſhould. Aſk whatever grace or favour you have need of, with great confidence; and if you know not what to aſk in particular, deſire our Lord, who knows your neceſſities, and the deſigns for which he gives himſelf to you in this Sacrament, and the effects which, by means of it, he works in ſouls, that he will accordingly give you, and work in you what ſhall be moſt pleaſing to him. Say to his Divine Majeſty,

To whom can a child better addreſs herſelf than to her Father; you are mine, dear Lord, I acknowledge no other: O ſhew yourſelf a Father, and permit me no longer to continue in my imperfections, eſpecially thoſe that oppoſe your deſigns. Give me a pure heart and perſeverance in your ſervice; grant that I may frequently lift up my thoughts to you, and ever walk in your preſence by Faith, Hope, Charity, and Conformity to your Will. Take from me all thoſe diſpoſitions which are contrary to your Spirit, and give me the bowels of Charity, that I may always compaſſionate the Weak, Sick, and Afflicted, ſupport the Imperfect, encourage and help the Perfect, and make myſelf all to gain them

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all to you: Sanctify me, that I may contribute to the Sanctification of others.

Let your patience be ever present to me in all adversities; your obedience in my submission to the orders of your Providence; and your Charity in supporting my neighbours, and labouring for their Salvation. Give me great confidence in your paternal Providence, and the grace to remain firm in your love during my whole life.

After the happiness of possessing you, I have but one thing more to wish, which is, that I may see and for ever enjoy you, whom I have had the happiness to receive: and I have all reason to hope it, for you not only give me your word for it, but you also give me yourself as pledge of it; saying, *He that eats this Bread of Life, shall live for ever.* I firmly hope it, and this though I should have committed all the sins of the world, yet I would not despair of mercy and pardon as soon as I asked it with an humble and contrite heart.

Then kiss the Sacred Wounds of Jesus, by them begging pardon for your sins; and at his feet beg true humility and the knowledge of yourself; at his right hand, purity

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purity of intention; at his left, patience in ſufferings; at his ſide, the love of God and your neighbour; all which beg thro' thoſe affections he felt in his heart when he received the Wounds in his Body.

O ſweet and unſpotted ſoul of Jeſus, ſince you are a voluntary priſoner, I cannot nor muſt not let you go till you bleſs me; vouchſafe, dear Lord, your Benediction both on me and all my actions, that they may ſucceed to your greater glory: and as you uſed to do when on earth, leave in my ſoul the marks of your ſweet preſence, to ſupply for your abſence.

I recommend to your mercy all thoſe I am obliged to pray for, as, each one of this Community, my Friends, Relations, and Benefactors, eſpecially all thoſe who have helped me towards you; give them your Divine Spirit, and all the graces neceſſary to be truly pleaſing to you; accompliſh in them, and in me, all the merciful deſigns your providence has had over us from all Eternity.

Pardon, dear Lord, the unworthineſs, indevotion, and all other defects with which I have now or ever received you, and permit them not to deprive me of the fruit

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fruit which otherways your Sacred Body would communicate to me.

O moſt Sacred Lady, Mother of my Saviour, I return you humble thanks for the happineſs I have poſſeſſed, and I beſeech you to thank your dear Son for me, and to ſupply for my defects, offer him all the ſervices you rendered him when on earth: and for his ſake, who gave me to you in the Perſon of Saint John, own me for your Child, and ſhew yourſelf a Mother to me, whom next to your Son I love, and place my truſt in.

Then, in return of thanks for the honour received, offer whatever you think his Divine Majeſty requires of you, or what may render you more pleaſing to him; as for example, a greater Fidelity in your particular Examen. If you are much given to ſeek your own eaſe, reſolve to mortify yourſelf in that point. If you ſeek yourſelf even in ſpiritual things more than God's glory, beg his grace that for the future you may ſacrifice all things to that end. If you judge others, or ſpeak of their defects, reſolve between this and your next Communion to fall no more into that fault. This will be the moſt acceptable return we can

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make our dear Lord for his kind visit; and by so doing we shall reap due profit from the Sacraments.

SEC. VII.

Another Manner of Entertainment after Communion.

Which consists in a great calm and recollection, where the soul, humbled in the presence of God, in her tastes how sweet he is.

O happy hour (may she say) which blesses me with the presence of you my God and Saviour! my heart is more content with possessing you than if it had the whole World! I desire but one thing more, which is, to be never separated from you who are the soul of my soul, and heart of my heart!

The principal occupation of those happy moments in which Christ remains in us (that is, as long as the Sacramental species remain) is to abandon ourselves entirely to his love, and sweetly to enjoy his presence. If we speak, they should be only words which love suggests, as these, pausing upon each: *I have found whom*

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whom my ſoul loves—nothing ſhall ſepa-rate me from him—My God and my All—My beloved is mine, and I will be all his—Each furniſhes ſufficient matter for thought and affection: and as long as we find that, we reſt in it.

Then we may keep ourſelves with great humility at our dear Saviour's feet, adoring him with aſtoniſhment that that infinite Majeſty, before whom Seraphims tremble and all Nature is but a point, ſhould come to viſit us! then paſſing to acts of thankſgiving; and being ſenſible of our incapacity of performing it as we ought, we muſt invite all creatures to do it for us, and offer him all the love of the Bleſſed in Heaven, and of all his faithful Servants upon earth who receive him. Finally, we muſt offer him his own earth, with all the immenſity it contains.

Then again reſt ſweetly at his feet, ſeeking after no more, becauſe we poſ-ſeſs our All in him, who is our God; ſenſible that we love him not as he de-ſerves, but well pleaſed that he is ſo amiable that none can duly love him. Say to him, dear Lord, I owe you more than I can repay you, but not more than

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than I would render you, were it in my power; though I am far from desiring to be quit of my obligations to you.

Then consider him as the life of your soul; beg him to sanctify it, that it may be a more fit habitation for him; also beseech him to quicken your spirit, and enflame your heart: then enter by consideration into his, and see how ardently that Divine Heart loved his Eternal Father from his incarnation till his expiring on the Cross. He sought nothing but to do his will, increase his glory, and pay him homage; which he still desires to do in the hearts of his Elect to the end of the world; beg him to do it in you, and sweetly unite yourself to all he shall do in you.

See then what that Sacred Heart of our dear Saviour may dislike in you, and purpose the amendment of it. Consider what his designs are over you, and what he requires of you; reflect what most hinders you from doing it, and resolve to do better for the future, begging his grace for that effect, without which we can do nothing.

Having performed this, you may retire, but let it be in recollection, which

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we ſhould endeavour to maintain during the whole day: This is neceſſary to draw profit from Holy Communion; for if our Lord's Divine Spirit remains no longer with us than his Body, (which is but while the Sacramental Species remain) our ſouls will not draw due nouriſhment from ſo divine a food. Since our Divine Viſitor opens his heart to us, and is willing to have us retire there, let us then take up our lodging and remain there; ſo keeping ourſelves from the reach of all that might diſquiet us.

To maintain in us the ſpirit of gratitude for ſo ſpecial a favour, (nothing being ſo diſpleaſing to God as ingratitude) we may, from time to time, make uſe of thoſe following aſpirations.

Let all in me praiſe you, Lord, for coming in perſon to viſit me.

Put yourſelf as a ſeal upon my ſoul, that nothing may enter it which diſpleaſes you.

Sanctify the place of your footſteps, which this day has been my heart.

What ſhall I render you for all you have done for me?

My ſoul, bleſs our Lord for all his mercies to you.

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SEC. VIII.

When Tempted.

To feed on God, and not to live according to the laws of his love, is horrible!

Shall I offend God, who this day has honoured me with his preſence?

When we practiſe ſome Act of Virtue,

We ſhould offer it in return of thanks for the great favour we received in the morning.

As when we are called to the Divine Office, make of it a Sacrifice of thankſgiving.

When we ſit at Table,

Let us think of the happineſs we have had this day, to be invited to the Table of Angels, and to feed on God himſelf.

By this means we ſhall not only return thanks, but alſo diſpoſe ourſelves for the next Communion; for a Religious Life is the beſt diſpoſition for Communion, and

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Communion is a new engagement to a Religious Life. By this means Jeſus will live in us, and we ſhall live for him, which is one of the admirable Effects of this Sacrament, it making us live for him who died for us.

We ſhould be miſerable if we partook only of the Body of Chriſt, and not of his Spirit: If we receive the one, and reject the other, we fruſtrate God's deſigns. Now to partake of his Spirit, we muſt enter into his Sentiments, and love and practiſe what he loved and practiſed, avoiding and hating what he hates.

The chief fruit we are to draw from Holy Communion, is to become one with Jeſus in Spirit; this being his petition to his Father: That as his Father and he were one, we ſhould be one with him in ſpirit. This we can never arrive to by our own ſtrength; Jeſus, whom we receive, will give it us if we aſk it, and on our parts concur with his Grace. One Communion is ſufficient to make us Saints.

It may be a help to devotion and attention, to receive Chriſt after different notions; for Example, as our Father, our Paſtor, our Phyſician, our Soul's Gueſt,

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Gueſt, our Viaticum: Sometimes in one manner, and ſometimes in another, as may ſuit beſt with our preſent diſpoſition; foreſeeing over-night after what manner we deſign to receive him, that at our awaking in the morning we may enter into the diſpoſition of it, which you will find at the end of the Book.

FOR HOLY COMMUNION.

A Second Manner of preparing for Communion.

Intentions for Communion.

My God, I offer my Communion in obedience to your Will, and for your greater Honour and Glory, and in thankſgiving to you, for having inſtituted this Divine Sacrament, and requiring that I, though ſo unworthy, ſhould receive you, which I do to obey your Will, and for the accompliſhment of all your merciful deſigns, in entering my heart by this Divine Sacrament, deſiring to receive and poſſeſs you, but for the end for which you would be received.

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I offer it alſo in memory and thankſgiving for your bitter Death and Paſſion; and to beg that the fruit of it may be applied to my ſoul, and that I may be united to you in as perfect a manner as you require, and that you may live in me, and I of your Spirit, and that you would enlighten my underſtanding and moderate my Paſſions, and grant me the Victory over them and all that diſpleaſes you, and pardon me my ſins, and give me the grace to be faithful to your Love in all temptations, and a perfect ſubmiſſion to your Will in all occaſions.

I alſo offer it in honour of your Divine Providence, and in thankſgiving for its effects, and merciful deſigns in my regard, and to obtain the grace to abandon myſelf to its decrees, and to confide in it in all events.

For each Sunday of the Month as follows.

Firſt Sunday. In honour of the Bleſſed Trinity and Thankſgiving for my Baptiſm, and to beg that I may perfectly fulfil the promiſes made for me thereat, and the gift of Faith, Hope, and Charity.

Second

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Second Sunday. In honour of our Saviour's humanity, and all the myſteries of his life, eſpecially his Nativity and Infancy, and to beg humility and ſimplicity of heart.

Third Sunday. In honour of the years of his private Life, labouring and working with his Mother and St. Joſeph for our Example, and to beg his Bleſſing on all my works, and that he will unite them to his, give me a pure intention in ſeeking but to pleaſe him by doing his Will.

Fourth Sunday. In honour and thankſgiving for our Saviour's Death and Paſſion, and to beg Salvation of my ſoul and pardon of my ſins, and the Spirit of Penance, and the Grace to draw that profit from the conſideration of his Paſſion, as he would have me, and the grace of a happy death. I offer it in honour of your moſt Holy Mother, and in thankſgiving for the Election of her, and for having created her ſo perfect both for his Glory and Good of all mankind, and for giving her to me for Mother; begging you will, for her ſake, give me all the qualities of a worthy child and ſervant of her's.

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I offer it alſo in thankſgiving, for giving one of your Heavenly Princes for my Guardian, and for all the Gifts of Grace and Glory you beſtowed on him; begging I may always comport myſelf towards him as you require I ſhould.

I offer it in honour of all your Saints, and to thank you for the Gifts and Graces you beſtowed on them in this life, and for the Glory you have rendered them in the other, eſpecially thoſe whoſe day it is, and to beg through their merits the grace to attain to the perfection you require of me.

I offer it in thankſgiving to you for my Vocation to Religion, and for all the helps you have therein provided me for my Salvation and Sanctification, and beg the grace to love you perfectly in this life, and eternally in the other, and a happy death.

Laſtly, I offer it for the intentions you would have me offer it up for, and for all thoſe I ought to offer it for, to gain whatever pardon may be gained, and to beg the ſolace and deliverance of the poor ſouls in Purgatory, eſpecially thoſe that will be moſt for your glory.

Prayers

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Prayers before Communion to the Bleſſed Trinity.

Eternal Father, I humbly beſeech you, for the love that moved you to give us your Son, that you will prepare my heart to receive him worthily: enkindle in my ſoul as fervent deſires to receive him, as you excited in the hearts of the Ancient Fathers, and other Holy Souls, who ſighed moſt ardently for his coming.

My moſt dear Redeemer, I beg you, for that infinite Charity that moved you to come to ſave us, that you will prepare for yourſelf in my ſoul ſuch a dwelling as ſhall be moſt pleaſing to you. I ſhould not have hoped for ſuch a favour as to receive you, if you yourſelf did not ordain me to approach, give me then in giving me yourſelf all the diſpoſitions required to receive you worthily; which I cannot have, unleſs you beſtow them as a firm Faith, an ardent Love, and a profound Humility; let, dear Lord, this Feaſt be to me a pledge of that you keep for me in a bliſsful eternity.

Divine Spirit, I beg you to purify my heart, and enflame it with the fire of

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of your Love, to receive my dear Saviour worthily, who was conceived by your ineffable operation in the womb of the Bleſſed Virgin, that the Divine heart of Jeſus may take delight in my Soul.

To our Bleſſed Lady.

Sacred Lady, worthy Mother of my Saviour, I beg you to obtain for me all thoſe holy diſpoſitions of heart, which I ought to have to receive worthily the Body and Blood of my Saviour, which he took from your Immaculate Subſtance: I beg it by the ardent wiſhes with which you expected the Coming of our Redeemer and Redemption of all mankind.

I beg it by the preparation you always brought to Divine Grace.

I beg it by the Humility, with the which you received the Word Incarnate in your Womb.

I beg it by the Love, with the which you embraced our dear Saviour, when come forth of your Sacred Womb.

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I beg it by the Sorrow, with the which you received him into your arms taken down from the Croſs.

I beg it by the Hope, with the which you laid him in the Sepulchre.

I beg it by the Preparation you brought to receive the Holy Ghoſt.

I beg it by the Devotion, with the which you received your dear Son in the moſt Bleſſed Sacrament.

I beg it by the Joy, with the which you was received by him into Heaven.

By all which I beg you will obtain me the grace to receive him worthily, and offer in place of what is wanting in me thoſe diſpoſitions, with the which you carried him nine months in your Womb, and by your interceſſion obtain that they may be applied to me.

Act of Faith.

My God, I have ſo firm a belief of your infinite Power and Goodneſs, that I doubt not of your having effectually incloſed your Body, Soul, and Divinity in this adorable Sacrament; your all-powerful Word has deſtroyed a Creature, and produced a God; grant it may de-

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ſtroy in me all that is mine and evil, and in place thereof produce what is yours, that your Spirit may live in me, and govern all my thoughts, words, and actions, that I may ſay with your Apoſtle, I live, not I, but Chriſt lives in me.

Act of Hope.

My God, ſince you ordain me to come, I will go with confidence to receive the honour you do me, and I hope you will fulfil your promiſe, that thoſe that eat this Bread ſhall live for ever, and that by means of this Divine Sacrament, you will grant me the grace of a pious Life and a happy Death, and accompliſh my deſire of loving you as I ought; and in giving me yourſelf, you will give me all the diſpoſitions to receive you worthily.

Act of Charity.

My Lord God, worthy of the love of all hearts, grant me the grace to love you with all mine; come into my heart and inflame it, that it may burn for ever in your love; you are wonderful in all your

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your works, and much more in your love, to work ſuch wonders for a creature ſo unworthy and undeſerving as I am: come, dear Lord, and triumph over my heart; and let yours, when I ſhall receive you, inflame mine with your love, and convert it ſo wholly to you, that it may love nothing but you, or for you.

Act of Contrition.

My God, I am ſorry and beg pardon for all my ſins and offences, eſpecially for my little reſpect in your Divine Preſence, and my want of attention in all my Prayers, and for the little profit I have drawn from this Divine Sacrament, and my ſloth and negligence in preparing for it.

Act of Humility.

O bread of Angels, in giving yourſelf to me, you become the food of beaſts, for I am no better; for beſides a ſinner, I am a baſe ſelf-lover. It is with confuſion that I venture to receive the honour you not only invite me to, but

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command me to accept of; let then my obedience to it ſupply for my defects, for I acknowledge I am void of all virtue and good works, nor have I any fit diſpoſitions in my ſoul to receive you with, and therefore muſt offer to you, in lieu of thoſe diſpoſitions that are wanting in me, thoſe of your own Divine Heart, when you received yourſelf, which I beg you will accept of, and likewiſe thoſe of your moſt Bleſſed Mother, when ſhe received you, and of all your Saints and faithful Servants; and grant me thoſe diſpoſitions I ought to have, to render my ſoul grateful to you, which I cannot have unleſs you beſtow them.

Act of Confidence.

My Lord, notwithſtanding my Unworthineſs, I will go with Confidence to receive you, becauſe I am ſick and infirm, and you aſſure me that the Phyſician is for them, and not for the well; and moreover, you being the Lamb of God that takes away the ſins of the World, I will go in hopes that you will take away mine.

Act

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Act of Petition.

Dear Lord, before you inſtituted this Divine Sacrament, you begged of your Eternal Father, that admirable Effect which you deſired it ſhould produce, which is, that we might be one with you, as you and he is one ineffable Goodneſs. Grant, dear Lord, it may be ſo, that I may be united to you in ſentiments, in inclinations, and in practice, imprint in the bottom of my ſoul the ſentiments I ought to have of your Death and Paſſion, of which this Sacrament is a memorial. Grant me the grace that, for your ſake, I may love what afflicts Nature, and will make it die, that I may live to you and for you.

Since your word is ſo powerful as to change bread into your Body, and wine into your Blood, ſhall not your Divine Perſon have the power to change me from what I am, into what you would have me be, and make me attain the end for which you created me, which is too ſublime for me to acquire, unleſs ſtrengthened by this Divine Food; it is therefore I go to receive it.

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Act after Communion.

Moſt adorable Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, I firmly believe I poſſeſs your Divinity; I adore you with all the extent of my heart, and moſt humbly thank you for viſiting me, your poor unworthy creature; act ſo powerfully in me, as to change me from what I am, into what you would have me be.

Eternal Father, what ſhall I render you for this immenſe Treaſure you have given me, in giving me your only Son? for in him I have all that can make me happy for time, and for all Eternity; it is he only that can worthily perform that duty, I therefore offer him to you in thankſgiving for it.

Receive him from me, and for me; for he is mine both by your gift and his, in acknowledgment of your ſupreme being and my dependence, and in thankſgiving for all your benefits beſtowed on me, the pooreſt and meaneſt of your creatures, incapable of returning you due thanks for the leaſt; receive his bitter Paſſion in ſatisfaction for all my ſins, and pardon me them; however great my ſins are, they cannot equal what he has ſuffered

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fered for them; I beg his perfect obedience to your Will may satisfy for my neglecting or slothfully performing it.

I offer you all the merits of his Life, which are infinite, to obtain the grace to love you, as you require and command me; and the grace to persevere therein, as long as life, and the grace of a happy Death, which I can only hope from your pure Mercy and your Son's Merits, in whose Name I beg it; and he assures me, that whatever I ask in his Name, you will grant: I may not doubt of it since he has said it, nor will I: and since Faith can remove mountains, and confidence obtain what it hopes for, let this my Faith and Confidence in the Merits of your Son move your mercies to grant my petition, seeing also that the price I offer to obtain it, is infinite.

What thanks do I owe you, my Saviour, for giving me yourself and all your merits in this adorable Sacrament? which you do with an infinite desire of my salvation: I have nothing that I can render you in return but myself, which I here give with my whole heart, renewing the promises made both at my Baptism and my Profession.

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Grant, dear Saviour, that your Sacred Body and Blood, which I have received, may ſo fortify me, that I may by means thereof overcome all your enemies, and thoſe of my Salvation, and remain faithful to your love during my whole life. I beg alſo the grace of a perfect conſecration of myſelf to you, and the force and ſtrength I have need of to ſupport and undertake thoſe ſufferings and mortifications, which you would have me endure for my ſins: grant me the grace that will nouriſh and make my ſoul to grow in all the perfection you require of me; and that grace purely gratuit of a final perſeverance, which will bring me to the poſſeſſion of you for all Eternity.

This, dear Lord, is the favourable time, the time of Salvation, ſince I poſſeſs you in my ſoul; and as nothing is impoſſible to you, for in one moment you can make in me that neceſſary and moſt deſirable change, by changing my heart, and giving me a new one and a right ſpirit, which I beſeech you to do, that I may love and praiſe you as I ought, and ſeek you with fervour, and accompliſh with perfection your Divine Will, and direct all I do for your Glory.

Give

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Give me the knowledge of what you require of me, and the grace to do it, govern all the motions of my heart, that it may always tend to you; grant that I may be meek and patient in adverſities, and grateful to you in proſperity, and not dejected in affliction: never rejoice, but for what makes for your Glory; nor grieve, but for what makes to the contrary; deſire but to pleaſe you, and fear nothing but to diſpleaſe you: grant that I may love you above all things, give me the grace frequently to lift up my heart to you, who are my Sovereign Good; and when ſo unhappy as to offend you, immediately to grieve for it, ſo as to obtain your pardon; and ſince you require that I walk before you, and be perfect, give me a perfect obedience to all your ordinances, and a patience which never may complain or murmur, an humility rather interior than exterior, a confidence without preſumption, a fear without deſpair: give to my ſoul a ſpiritual joy in all that relates to your ſervice, a heart which entertains no unworthy affection, or evil intention; grant to my underſtanding to know you, and to my will

to

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to love you, and fervour to ſerve you, and to deſire nothing more than frequently to receive you in this Sacrament of love, and each time to come better prepared, and more worthy of that favour than other; grant that the remembrance of your ſufferings may faſten me ſo to the croſs with you, that being united to you here on earth, I may for ever enjoy you in Heaven.

My dear Saviour, ſince for my ſake you have deſcended from Heaven into this adorable Sacrament to conduct me thither, permit me not to go aſtray from the perfection you require of me, but make me follow you, who are the way, the truth, and the life; I beg it by the love that obliged you to give your life for my Salvation, and that you will grant me the grace to know, love, and ſerve you, and to perſevere in ſo doing till death.

I here render you the Right and Liberty you have given me over myſelf, and return for your goodneſs in viſiting me your unworthy creature; diſpoſe of me as you pleaſe, for I am yours, and deſire to live but for you, and according to your will, and not mine; permit me not to follow the deſires of my heart, when

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when contrary to yours, but make me walk the way of, the perfection you require of me.

Moſt adorable Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, in view of my obligations to you, and in gratitude for them, I here in your Preſence renew the Promiſes made for me at Baptiſm, and thoſe I made at my profeſſion, which I beg pardon for unfaithfully obſerving, and the grace that I may faithfully obſerve them for the future.

Pardon, dear Lord, my ſins and offences, and the faults I have committed, in unworthily receiving you, for want of a due preparation: I beg it in your name, and therefore hope you will grant it, for it would be a new offence for me to doubt of your mercy, which I beg I never may be guilty of.

I recommend to you all thoſe that have deſired my Prayers, or that I am on any account obliged to pray for, grant them all thoſe graces that are neceſſary for them, and accompliſh in them all your merciful providence has deſigned them.

Moſt Sacred Lady, worthy Mother of my dear Saviour, it is my duty to return you

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you thanks for giving me your Son in this adorable Sacrament, which I moſt humbly do, and beg you will thank him for me, and obtain me the grace always worthily to receive him. You are the Mother of my Salvation, and Treaſurer of all the graces of your Son, and his Holy Mother; it is by your means that he grants them to ſome, and more abundantly to others: obtain for me all thoſe you know I ſtand in need of: I conſecrate my heart to you, it is to your Son's and your Glory, that I dedicate all I am capable of; obtain that my heart may be ſo fixed in your Son's and your love, that it may not be in the power even of Hell to withdraw me from your love and ſervice, or make me do any thing unworthy of the honour I have now received. *Amen.*

The remaining time you may employ the three powers of your ſoul; your memory, in calling to mind all the benefits you have received of his merciful goodneſs, and thanking him for them; your underſtanding, in reflecting on the greatneſs of them, eſpecially this you have now received; and your will in acts of love to him.

You

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You may alſo expoſe to him the evils you groan under, and how they threaten death to your ſoul, and the corruption of your heart, your ſelf-love, and want of courage; that ſeeing the grievances of your wounds, he may be moved to cure them.

Aſpirations which may ſerve during the Day.

When, my God, ſhall I be all yours, by an entire fidelity to your will?

Take from me all that may be oppoſite to your Glory: Let the fire of your love conſume all that is amiſs in me.

How comes it, dear Lord, that having ſo often fed on you, I am yet ſo weak as to be overcome by the leaſt difficulty?

A Preparation for Communion, by commemorating the Death and Burial of Chriſt.

None can doubt but that, of all other Preparations for Communion, that of the Death and Burial of our Lord is the beſt, as being the moſt ſuitable to our Lord's deſign, ſince he bids us do it in the memory of his Death: Both his Death and his

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his Burial is repreſented in Holy Maſs; the latter by the Communion of the Prieſt and the Communicants.

The Altar is Calvary, where Chriſt offers the ſame Sacrifice as on the Croſs, and our hearts are the Sepulchres which he has choſen to be laid in, and will ſanctify, if we receive him with the diſpoſitions we ought.

This Preparation contains two parts; the one is to purify our ſouls from ſin, the other is to adorn it with Acts of virtue. As to the firſt, it may begin from the time we have been to confeſſion: It conſiſts in purifying our ſouls from ſin, whereby we have rendered it an unfit ſepulchre for our Lord to be laid in, and by a great care not to commit the leaſt ſin, nor to defile it any more.

From time to time we may ſay, dear Lord, your Sepulchre was neat and clean, but my heart is far otherways; for tho' it has been waſhed in Confeſſion with your precious Blood, yet the root of ill habits remains ſtill in me; for your own ſake, I beg you will purify it from all that diſpleaſes you

The ſecond duty is to adorn our hearts with virtues, which is done by embracing all

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all occaſions, which ſhall offer of practiſing them, and by performing all our ſpiritual duties with more fervour, and by frequent aſpirations; begging our Lord to beſtow whatever may render our hearts a more fit habitation for him to repoſe in.

Our Intentions for Communion. The ſame as before.

To the Bleſſed Trinity before Communion.

Eternal Father, I beg you, for the love which moved you to give your Son, that you will beſtow on me all the graces I ſtand in need of worthily to receive him.

Divine Saviour, who, out of your infinite Charity, have not only given your Life for me, but yourſelf to me in this adorable Sacrament, give me all the diſpoſitions I ought to have worthily to receive you. I offer you the diſpoſitions with the which you received yourſelf, when you inſtituted this adorable Sacrament, and thoſe with the which your Bleſſed Mother and your faithful Servants

 received

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received you with: Accept of them in lieu of thoſe that are wanting in me.

Divine Spirit, by whoſe operation my Lord was conceived in the Womb of his Bleſſed Mother, create in me thoſe diſpoſitions which will render my ſoul a fit habitation for him.

To our Bleſſed Lady.

Moſt Sacred Lady, Mother of my Saviour, and my dear Mother, take pity of my poverty and want of all good, and for the ſake of your dear Son, ſend me of yours what is wanting in me to receive worthily your dear Son. It concerns you, that he be received as he ought to be: You know that I have nothing of my own, whereby I can do ſo. Shew yourſelf a Mother to me in this occaſion, by ſupplying for what is wanting in me, it is what I moſt humbly beg of you.

Act of Faith.

I believe, my God, what Faith teaches me, that your infinite Goodneſs has made you deſcend from Heaven to come to me, under the accidents of Bread; leſt the brightneſs

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brightneſs of your Glory ſhould hinder me from approaching you, come to take poſſeſſion of my heart as of your Kingdom; and to animate me with your ſpirit, that I may live of your life: It is for that I deſire, above all things, to receive you, accompliſh it in me, according to your deſigns.

After Contrition.

I am heartily ſorry, and beg pardon for my ſins, eſpecially for my little reſpect, and for wandering in my thoughts when in your real preſence, and for my continual infidelities to your graces; for all which I beg pardon, by the merits of the Blood you ſhed for them.

Act of Love.

No thought, dear Lord, can be more ſweet than to think of your Love expreſſed in all you have ſuffered for me, ſince it gives me grounds to hope that you will pardon my ſins, having ſatisfied to the Juſtice of your Eternal Father for them; you have had the goodneſs to make a tranſport of all your merits, which are infinite to him for me: The price

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you have given is of more worth and value, than all the goods of grace and glory I can hope for, or he beſtow. How great is my obligation to love you, which I deſire to do with my whole heart, and to ſeek in all things to pleaſe you, and to refuſe nothing, however painful and hard, that you require of me.

Act of Humility.

Though my unworthineſs, my God, terrifies me, your Goodneſs re-aſſures when I hear you ſay, Come to me, all you that are burdened with the weight of your miſeries, and I will eaſe you; which invitation makes me forget, dear Lord, what I am, and go with Confidence, and with an aſſurance of pleaſing you by ſo doing, as alſo, becauſe, bid by thoſe that holds your place to approach, notwithſtanding my unworthineſs, I therefore do and hope by it to obtain that neceſſary grace to overcome what hinders my advancement in the way of perfection.

Dear Lord, ſay to my ſoul when you enter it, this day Salvation is made to it, by granting me grace to love you only, and to deſire and ſeek your Glory in all I do,

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do, and to dwell with you on Mount Calvary, by a conſtant remembrance of your ſufferings and gratitude for the ſame; and when you have given yourſelf to me, take my ſoul with yourſelf in it.

Act after Communion.

I firmly believe I have received, and now poſſeſs the Body of my Lord, that was all covered with wounds for my ſalvation, and being dead for me, was laid in a ſepulchre. I adore, my Lord, all thoſe Sacred Wounds, and thank you for the profuſion of the Blood you ſhed from them for me, giving me even to the laſt drop.

What can I think or ſay, dear Lord, at the moſt afflicting ſight, ſince you received all thoſe Wounds for me? and what renders it more afflicting is, that you received them in the houſe of my heart.

Give me, dear Lord, tears, both to bewail your ſufferings and my ſins, the unhappy cauſe of them; and ſince you ſuffered them all for me, apply the merits of them to my ſoul, that it may produce fruits worthy of them.

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Grant that I may enjoy the effects of all you have merited me by your Paſſion; give me your Spirit, your Grace, and your Love, that I may love you alone, that have loved me to ſuch a degree as to give your Blood and Life for me: fortify my weakneſs, and ſtrengthen my will in good, that I may ſo operate with fidelity in the manner you require of me, as that I may be a victim of your Will.

Nothing has been capable, dear Lord, to hinder you from being all mine, neither Heaven, nor your Divinity, nor the gibbet of the Croſs: grant me the grace, that nothing may hinder me from being all yours, to whom I owe myſelf both for Creation and Redemption.

It was never heard that in your mortal life you lodged with any, which you did not liberally reward with your gifts; I beg you will do the ſame to your preſent Habitation, which is my heart: let the touch of yours, which conſecrates all things, ſanctify my heart that it may be grateful to you.

Anima Chriſti Sanctifica me.
Corpus Chriſti ſalva me.

Sanguis

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Sanguis Christi inebria me.
Aqua Lateris Christi lava me.
Passio Christi conforta me.
O Bone Jesu exaudi me.
Intra tua Vulnera absconde me.
Ne permittas me separari a te.
Ab Hoste maligno defende me.
In hora mortis meæ voca me.
Et jube me venire ad te.
Ut cum Sanctis tuis laudem te.
In secula seculorum. Amen.

I am poor, miserable, and weak, and of myself can do nothing; but with your grace, nothing is impossible to me: my life is all human, I know not if I even am, but this I know, that I am most miserable to live after such a manner: change, dear Lord, my life, and live in me, and let me live but for you, you can do it, that can do all things, and I hope and beg you will.

You see the danger I am in; hold me with your all-powerful hand that I fall not: direct me with your Spirit that I stray not; defend me, dear Lord, from myself, and permit me not to follow my irregular inclination and my own will, since it separates me from you;

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you; make me ſenſible what ought to be the life of one that feeds on you, and give me the grace that mine may be ſuch.

I beg that your Divine Preſence may ſo fortify me in your love, that I may overcome all the enemies of it, and make daily more and more progreſs in it, and that having given yourſelf to me, you will give me the grace to give myſelf entirely to you, and that nothing may ever ſeparate me from you.

I conſecrate to you my ſoul and body, that you may ſanctify both my actions and ſufferings, that you may render them meritorious; my deſires and good reſolutions, that you may ſuſtain them by your grace; my deſigns and undertakings, that you may bleſs them; my life and my death, that you may ſanctify them; and above all, I offer you my heart that you may enflame it, and reign for ever in it.

Take, dear Lord, my heart, and leave me your ſpirit, for how can I live when I ſee you dead, unleſs you leave me your ſpirit? that it may live in me, and make me to live for you only, and deplore the remainder of my days, in the bitterneſs

bitterneſs of my heart, your death and my ſins, which have been the cauſe of it, for which I moſt humbly beg pardon.

I beg, dear Lord, that you will grant me the victory over my paſſion, eſpecially that which moſt oppoſes my Sanctification, and makes me unfaithful to your Love; remove all obſtacles to your deſigns, and permit me not to be ſo ungrateful, after what you have done for me, as to refuſe to live for you, whatever it muſt coſt me.

Your Apoſtle tells me, that I am not my own but yours, you having bought me at a great price, which is more certain than certainty itſelf, and more true than all truths. Nothing can please me more than this aſſurance, that I am all yours and not my own, my ſoul does infinitely rejoice thereat. I am yours by an infinity of titles, you having redeemed me and delivered me, and ſpared my life, when I was guilty of death, from which time you tell me that I ceaſed being my own and become yours; may I ever be ſo; it is in that conſiſts my comfort and my happineſs.

Though by neceſſity I am yours, I will be ſo by my free choice, and therefore I bequeath

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bequeath my Soul to you, my moſt dear Redeemer—my body to your ſweet Providence—my heart to your Love—my liberty to your Will—my whole being to your Glory——all my good and bad thoughts, words, and deeds to your Mercies—my Life and my Death to your Providence—all my affairs, both Spiritual and Temporal, to the Protection of your moſt dear Mother.

My Lord and my God, ſince you are pleaſed to be all mine, I beg you will give me the grace to be all yours: Whoſe ſhould I be but yours, my Creator and Redeemer? who has ſo many rights over me, and to whom I totally owe myſelf. I bid adieu, therefore, to all Creatures, to dedicate myſelf wholly to the good Will and Pleaſure of you, my God and Creator.

Moſt Sacred Lady, Mother of my Saviour, and my moſt dear Mother, you was preſent at the Sepulchre of your Son, and with your Hand and Advice aſſiſted them to bury him. I beg your aſſiſtance for that effect, that I may bury him in my heart, which by Holy Communion is become a myſtical Sepulchre of his.

Help

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Help me to render him all the duties I owe him, in imitation of your example; with what tender affection did you receive him into your Arms, when taken down from the Croſs? With what grief did you behold all his Wounds? you waſhed them with your tears, which flowed in great abundance from your eyes; you kiſſed them with profound reſpect, and with the boſom of your Love you imbalmed them; obtain me the grace to do the ſame, and not only to weep for Compaſſion of his Sufferings, but alſo for my ſins, the unhappy cauſe thereof: and as my poverty affords me not the ſweet perfumes of virtues to imbalm him with, I beg you, as my moſt dear Mother, that you will offer him yours to ſupply for what is wanting in me.

When you ſaw him laid in the Sepulchre, how greatly did your grief increaſe, to ſee yourſelf deprived of his Sacred Body? you would willingly have remained by him at the Sepulchre; but becauſe it was God's Will you ſhould not, you ſeparated yourſelf from him, teaching me, by your Example, to deprive myſelf of whatever is moſt dear to me, when God requires it.

My

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My dear Saviour, I offer you the ſweet perfumes of all virtues, with the which your Bleſſed Mother imbalmed you, and I wiſh it were in my power, tho' it coſt me never ſo much, to anoint your Sacred Body with the ſame.

I beg, by the merits of your Sacred Mother, to grant me the grace to love you and her, ſo as that nothing may be able to withdraw me from it.

Mother of my Saviour, accept of me for your Child, and bury me in the Wounds of your dear Son, and obtain for me, that I may live in a faithful obſervance of all the duties of a Spouſe of his.

Your reſt, dear Lady, was in Labours; your delight was in the Croſs, and your Life was in the Death of Jeſus; obtain for me by the merits of your Son, that I may imitate you.

SEC. IX.

Reflections for our firſt awaking, when we deſign to receive our Lord as Father.

Conſidering him as your Father, and yourſelf as his moſt ungrateful child, and

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and desirous of returning to your duty, say, *I will arise and go to my Father*, do it with speed, and with a great confidence that he will receive and forgive you.

While you are dressing, keep your thoughts more or less upon the same subject.

Before Communion.

Reflect that *that* Lord, whom Heaven and earth reverences as their God, has adopted you for his child, and requires that you should esteem and love him as your Father. Hence take courage to go to him, for such is his love, that he is not content to call himself and to be our Father, but because a Mother's love is more tender, he compares himself to a Mother, saying, that though peradventure she may forget the infant she brought forth, yet will he not be unmindful of us, for he has us written in his hand; and then again, as a Mother makes much of the child she nourishes at her breast, so will he cherish and comfort us. What motives for confidence! let us then believe that since he is our

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Father, he cannot but act like a Father, if we behave ourſelves like good children, aſking him pardon, and being truly ſorry for having offended him, which if we do, he will entirely forgive us, and receive us to his embraces with tenderneſs, like to the Father of the prodigal Son. With this aſſurance let us riſe and go to Communion, ſaying to ourſelves, *I will ariſe and go to my Father.*

After Communion.

Conſider that your moſt merciful Father has received you into favour, and in token of it has made this great banquet for you, a greater cannot be made! for which return him the beſt thanks you are able, and with great humility ſay,

O my Lord and merciful Father, it had been ſufficient, if you had only permitted me to have dwelt in ſome corner of your Houſe among your meaneſt ſervants, which had been more than I deſerved; but you in place of that have acted like what you are, a God of infinite Mercy!

How great is your goodneſs to take upon you the Name and Office of a Father,

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Father, in regard of duſt and aſhes, which I am! how can I poſſibly give a condign welcome to ſuch a Father, or expreſs the joys my Heart is full of, to receive you into it! make me a Child worthy of ſo good a Father, and imprint the character of it in my Heart and actions. Pardon all I have offended you in, and give me the Spirit of Adoption which may make me love you, and have recourſe to you as to my Father; grant me alſo your fear, which may keep me from ever diſpleaſing you in the leaſt.

SEC. X.

Reflections for our Firſt Awaking, when we conſider him as our Paſtor.

Conceive a great joy that Chriſt your good Paſtor will come this day to viſit you in Holy Communion; and be aſſured that he will fulfil all the duties of a good Paſtor in your regard.

While you dreſs, entertain your thoughts upon that ſubject.

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Before Communion.

Reflect that Chriſt your good Paſtor is deſcended from Heaven, and in this Sacrament, to ſeek and ſave you, who have moſt ungratefully ſtrayed from him; and that not once only, or a hundred times, but as often as you have ſinned. Acknowledge that of yourſelf you are incapable either to find your Paſtor, or the way to him, did not he in his mercy come to you, which in this Sacrament he is pleaſed to do, and will perform all the duties of the beſt of Paſtors, as he declares by the Mouth of his Prophet, promiſing, *That he himſelf will ſeek and viſit his ſheep, &c. and in the moſt plentiful Paſtures will he feed them, &c. that which was gone aſtray he will bring back, that which was broken he will bind up, that which was weak he will ſtrengthen,* and that which was fat and ſtrong he will keep: ponder every particular, for each is full of pith; and encouraged by the ſame, go with confidence to receive your dear Paſtor.

After

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After Communion.

Adore and thank your Divine Paſtor for coming to ſeek you who ſo little deſerve this his tender concern for you. Admire his Love! he ſtands in no need of you, yet ſeeks you as if his happineſs depended upon you! Acknowledge his goodneſs in feeding you with his own moſt precious Body and Blood, which he does with ſo great a Love, that he even threatens Death to thoſe that will not approach to receive him.

Say to him, your mercies, Lord, exceed all thought. I can never thank and praiſe you ſufficiently for your great goodneſs, in making yourſelf my Food, and ſeeking me when gone aſtray, which I have ſo often done! and alſo for placing me in your richeſt paſtures; nay, in your ſheepfold Holy Religion, in which you place your Elect Flock, and from whence (if I hinder you not) you will carry me to your ſheepfold of Eternal Bliſs; for all which I owe you more gratitude than all Hearts are capable of.

Pardon my ungrateful withdrawing myſelf from your Conduct, and making uſe even of your Benefits to offend you.

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Though there is nothing in me, dear Lord, that can merit your mercy, yet knowing you are ſo bountifully good, and ſo inclined to forgive, I here with proſtrate Heart implore your Pardon for all my paſt Ingratitudes, and beg moreover this unlimited favour, that you will imprint anew your mark upon me, to make appear that I am of thoſe ſheep which your mercies will place on your Right Hand at Judgment. Let your Croſs diſtinguiſh me, not a neceſſary bearing it, (which all muſt do) but a voluntary embracing it for Love of you: Grant that I may conſtantly hear and obey your voice whenever it calls me.

SEC. XI.

Reflection for our Firſt Awaking when we receive him as our Phyſician.

Reflect that Chriſt, your Divine Phyſician, will come this day to viſit you, to whoſe power and ſkill no diſeaſe is incurable. Riſe with great Confidence of obtaining your Soul's Health, ſince he requires no more to cure us, but an acknowledgment

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knowledgment of your infirmity, and a real desire to be cured.

Before Communion.

Consider that when Christ was in the World, none ever came to him to be cured who did not obtain it. No sooner had the Centurion told him of his sick Servant, but presently he answered that he would come and cure him. And to the Lepers, who only said, *Lord, if you will you can make us clean*; he answered, *I will that you be clean*; and to several others he offered Health, without being asked.

By all which move yourself to a great Confidence of obtaining the cure of your soul's diseases: It is chiefly for that end he desires to come to us, as his own Words express, saying, the healthy have no need of a Physician, but those that are infirm; signifying thereby that his chief office is to be a Physician of souls; and to the end we may be healed of all our infirmities, he has made a Medicine of his own Flesh and Blood, and has left it us in this Sacrament, that by receiving it we may be cured of all our diseases.

O

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O what a Phyſician! and what a remedy! who can doubt of being cured, for he not only cures paſt ſins, but preſerves us from future ones: Let us then with confidence riſe and go to receive him, ſince he declares that he comes for the ſick and infirm, as ſuch let us approach him that he may cure us.

After Communion.

Conformable to the foregoing conſideration, entertain your Divine Phyſician. Confide that only the touch of his Sacred Body will effect the perfect cure of all your ſoul's diſeaſe. Return him infinite thanks for taking this office upon him, and for his charity in viſiting ſo poor and loathſome a ſick ſoul as yours is, and beg him to excuſe the ſtench which your diſeaſes ſend forth, and which would ſtrike horror to a leſs goodneſs than his.

Lay open your maladies to him as well as you can; and if your ignorance is ſo great that you know them not, or cannot declare them, beg him that knows them to cure them, and to cure the blindneſs of your underſtanding; to molify the hardneſs of your heart as to good; to ſtop the impetuous

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impetuous courſe of your will to evil; to purge you of thoſe hateful diſpoſitions of pride and envy; and to root up ſelf-love, the ſource of all evils.

SEC. XII.

Reflections for our Firſt Awaking, when we conſider him as our ſoul's Gueſt.

Reflect on thoſe words our Lord ſpoke to Zaccheus, and ſuppoſe the ſame are ſaid to you: *Come down in haſte, for this day I will abide in your houſe.* Conceive a great deſire of that happineſs, and riſe with ſpeed.

Before Communion.

Conſider that the ſame Lord whom you are to receive, complained to his Diſciples that the foxes had holes and the birds their neſts, but the Son of man had no where to repoſe his head, having been refuſed entertainment, when in the ſhape of man: he has cloathed himſelf with the form of bread, that ſo he may enter your heart, and make your ſoul his manſion.

Acknowledge

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Acknowledge the pobrneſs and vileneſs of the lodging of your heart to receive and lodge ſo great a God. Say to him, Tho' you are pleaſed to ſay, dear Lord, that your delights are to be with the children of men, yet how is it poſſible you can take delight in ſo poor a habitation as mine is? therefore, for your own ſake, give me what may render my heart an agreeable dwelling to you, for unleſs you beſtow it, I cannot have it.

The deſire you expreſs of being my gueſt, encourages me to receive you, tho' I am moſt unworthy: you expect not an invitation from me, but invite yourſelf, and ever preſs to come, aſſuring me that you are ever calling at the door of my heart, and that if I will open to you, you will come in and ſup with me, and let me ſup with you.

After Communion.

Welcome that Lord to this poor home of mine; welcome my ſoul's felicity, thrice happy hour which has bleſſed me with the preſence of my God! a greater Happineſs I cannot receive on earth, nor you give, becauſe you give yourſelf. I bleſs

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bleſs your mercies, and again bid you as welcome as a heart, filled with love and gratitude, can do!

But when I reflect on myſelf, how can I welcome you! my ſoul is defiled with ſin, and my houſe is nothing but a den of beaſts, and hideous monſters! though for yourſelf you are highly welcome; yet in regard to what I am, I muſt deſire you, with St. Peter, to depart from me to thoſe holy ſouls who are prepared to receive ſo great a gueſt. Leave this den of mine, for it is better I ſhould periſh in miſery, than entertain your ſanctity in ſo prophane a heart.

But if your goodneſs is ſuch that notwithſtanding you are willing to ſtay, chaſe from me all you diſlike in me, and all that is hurtful to me; purify my heart, or create a new one in me. Dear Lord, you know my poverty, and therefore you cannot expect that I can offer you any thing but requeſts, your coming therefore cannot be to take, but to give me entertainment. Your entering my heart is not ſo much to be my gueſt as to make me yours. Say to my ſoul what you did to Zaccheus, *this day ſalvation is made on this houſe:* you can as eaſily

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eaſily beſtow ſalvation on me, as on him, and it is chiefly for that end you come; ſpeak then that word of comfort to my ſoul, and it ſhall be for ever bleſſed, and pardon the bad entertainments I have given you, whenever I have had the honour to receive you: and alſo all the faults I have ever committed; and beſides your pardon for the paſt, give me amendment for the future, and ſuch holy thoughts and amorous deſires, as are fitting to entertain ſo great a goodneſs, and ſo good a God.

SEC. XIII.

Reflections at our Firſt Awaking, when we receive him as our VIATICUM.

Imagine this to be the day in which you are to take your great journey from time to eternity. Reflect, with gratitude and confidence, that Chriſt himſelf will be your Viaticum, ſay to your ſoul,

Ariſe, let us go and die with Jeſus.

Before

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Before Communion.

Conſider that in this Sacrament is truly contained the Bread of Life, it being the Body of Chriſt, who is life itſelf, and gives life to the dead: he comes to you, to enable you to go to him; and to make your journey from earth to heaven, from time to a happy Eternity. O infinite Goodneſs! I can fear no evil if you are with me; I will approach you with confidence, confiding, that ſince you give yourſelf to me here, you will not refuſe yourſelf to me in heaven: and I hope your coming is to lead me to that happineſs, and render me worthy of it, by applying to my ſoul the merits of the Blood you ſhed, which I am going to receive.

Come then, dear Lord, but before you enter my Heart, forgive me all my offences. I wiſh I could by my preſent devotion and fervour ſupply for all my defects of former Communions; if you beſtow it on me I ſhall; it is what I humbly beg. Grant, or receive (in lieu of what is wanting in me) thoſe Sacred Diſpoſitions with which you received yourſelf, and thoſe with which your

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Bleſſed Mother, and all your ſervants, have received you.

After Communion.

Adore Chriſt in your breaſt, with ſentiments of a reſpectful fear, conſidering him as your Judge; and then reflecting that he is not leſs your Saviour, aſſuming a freſh confidence, ſay to him,

Is it not in you that you would have me place my whole confidence? I do, dear Lord, for I know your Divine Heart is mine, and for me; this aſſures me againſt all fears, and makes me hope that your Judgment will be, in my regard, a Judgment of love and mercy.

Bleſſed be the Father of Mercies for giving me my Redeemer for Judge, without which, what could I have hoped for! O turn your eyes from the evils I have done, and only look on what your Goodneſs has done for me. I acknowledge there is nothing in me which is not criminal, but there is not one of my ſins for which you have not ſhed your Blood to waſh away its ſtain. Permit me not to be loſt, after having coſt you ſo dear! my ſoul is in your hands, which

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which is all my conſolation; it is infinitely more ſecure than in my own! by the Precious Blood you ſhed for it, grant it may never be ſeparated from you.

I offer my life, and all I ſhall leave by dying, as a Sacrifice to you. Permit not death to ſeize on me ſo ſuddenly as to find me unprovided. Sanctify my death, and grant I may die humble, penitent, and perfectly ſubmiſſive to your Will; heartily pardoning all, and receiving pardon of all my offences; fortified by your Grace, and Holy Sacraments, with due ſentiments of gratitude. Such a death I ardently deſire, grant it me as ſoon as you pleaſe; and to obtain it, and a favourable ſentence, I beg your grace that for the remainder of my life I may obſerve all you ordain me for that effect, which is, *If I judge not, I ſhall not be judged; if I pardon all, I ſhall receive pardon of all my ſins*; this, dear Lord, I do with my whole heart.

O my Judge, but more Father than Judge! if it depends but on my obſerving theſe articles to ſecure me your favour, and to remain for ever in it, behold me with your grace, ready to perform them; one favour I beg, which is

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that you will tarry with me, my dear Saviour, becauſe my days are almoſt ſpent, and this viſible ſun will ſoon ſet to me: O! bring me to the place where you yourſelf are the Eternal Lamp.

Leave me not till I breathe forth my Soul, which I now recommend into your Sacred Hands, that it may remain for ever with you. Amen.

Anſwers to the Objections againſt frequent Communions. Out of St. Francis of Sales.

If worldlings aſk you (ſays the Saint) why you communicate ſo often? tell them you do it to learn to love God; to be purified from your imperfections, to be comforted in your afflictions, and to find reſt, repoſe, and eaſe in your weakneſſes. Tell them that two ſorts of perſons ſhould communicate very often; the *Perfect*, becauſe being well diſpoſed, they would wrong themſelves did they not approach to the very ſource of Perfection; and the *Imperfect*, that they may aſpire to Perfection; the Strong, leſt they become weak; and the Weak, to become ſtrong; the Sick to be cured, and the Healthy to be preſerved from ſickneſs.

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neſs. Tell them that for your own part, as one very imperfect, weak, and ſick, you have great need to communicate often with him, who is your only Perfection, Strength, and Health. Tell them that thoſe who have not many worldly affairs ſhould communicate often, becauſe they have good leiſure; and thoſe who have many temporal occupations ſhould likewiſe do ſo, becauſe they ſtand in need of it; and that he that labours much, muſt eat often, and ſtrengthen himſelf with hearty food. Tell them that you receive the Bleſſed Sacrament to learn to receive it well; for no man can do an action well which he has not often practiſed; therefore communicate as often as you can with Counſel and Advice of your Ghoſtly Father.

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A PRAYER

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A PRAYER

FOR OUR KING AND COUNTRY.

MOST adorable Lord JESUS CHRIST, Saviour of the World, *God of Hoſts, and Prince of Peace,* look down with eyes of compaſſion upon our manifold miſeries: we confeſs our heinous tranſgreſſions; we turn to you with contrite hearts; to you, O God! our *Refuge* and *Defence: Remember not, O Lord! our or our Parents Offences, nor take vengeance of our ſins:* regard us, as you are our Paſtor, as the ſheep of your flock, and as the poor remains of your ancient ſheepfold in England: *Be mindful of your congregation, which you have poſſeſſed from the beginning:* O JESUS, be to us a JESUS; be to us a *Saviour*; hear, O God, our Prayer; let our cry come unto you: we believe in you; we call upon your Holy Name; let us not be confounded; ſpare us, O Lord! ſpare your People, leſt your enemies may ſay, *Where is their God? your Altars are polluted; your inheritance deſtroyed; but you, O my Lord, how long?*

Inſpire,

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PRAYER.

Inſpire, O JESUS, with your Holy Grace; endue with your Holy Spirit the Miſſioners of our nation conſecrated to your ſervice; renew in them the wiſdom, zeal, and piety of their Predeceſſors; purify their lives, ſecond their words, and ſanctify their myſtery, that in and by you the good may be confirmed; the wandering may be reclaimed; and the ſpotleſs Religion formerly planted, may once more revive and bloſſom in our Land.

Shower down your bleſſings, O bountiful God, upon your anointed *our* SOVEREIGN *King George*, and *all the Royal Family*. And as you have mercifully pleaſed to call them to the unity of your Faith and boſom of your Church; let them ſee that you are *their Safeguard*; grant them Conſtancy, grant them Fidelity to your Divine Graces, and grant them perſeverance in your Love and Service: direct them in their Councils; ſtrengthen them in their Enterprizes; and render them victorious over all their Enemies; re-eſtabliſh them in their Kingdoms, and give them many years to enjoy the ſame. This we beg by the Paſſion and Merits of JESUS CHRIST your only Son, who lives and reigns with you in union of the Holy Ghoſt for ever and ever. *Amen.*

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